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Trade Journal for the Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Industry

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KITCHEN APPLIANCES

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Featured inside: Kabir Jeet Singh, Saransh Goila, Parvez Sheikh, Manu Chandra



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To whomsoever concerned - or not,



In business, 25 years is an age, they say. I know what they mean. Especially when I look back to the summer of 1992, when a journey that was to take several rapid twists and turns over the next two decades and more, began in New Delhi.

Back in the early '90s, I used to be coordinator for several fashion stores' advertising campaigns and creatives. During those assignments, I would typically end up having long conversations with the retailers themselves. And each encounter left me impressed, but also wanting more. Each of these retail and fashion brands and their promoters - from **Ravi Nanda** of the posh Heritage store in South Extension to the mega family outlet Big Jo's **Deepak Bhargava** to Shapes' **Ashwini Anand**, from Chunmun's **Sharad Suri** to Numero Uno's **Narinder Singh** - was an innovator. Each entrepreneur - from **Hemant Jain** of Killer Jeans to **Prasad Pabrekar** of Spykar, **Sanjay Dhanuka** of Sumangal, the late **Haribhai** of Moustache, **Jitubhai** of Jade Blue, **Rahul Mehta** of UFO Jeans - had such a rich hands-on understanding of consumer behaviour, of store design, of navigation, sourcing, cost management, you name it. But these insights were scattered, unrecorded. And just like it is today, no retailer had all the pieces. They were all operating in silos - with small, but crucial, gaps in their exposure. If only they had a way to access each other's intelligence!

I was sure a business magazine that assembled all this intelligence together - along with inputs from specialists in fashion creation, marketing and retailing - would have tremendous relevance in a market where fashion consumption was about to explode! And so, in May of 1992, IMAGES was born.

It wasn't easy, I can tell you that. We printed 3,000 copies of the first edition of IMAGES, funded by the sale of my motorcycle (a Hero Honda Sleek, a gift from my mother on my previous birthday). I was sorry to see the bike go, but I was more excited about the potential start of retail intelligence in India.

I think we set the tone in the very first issue itself, with visual spreads on fashion forecasting and trend analysis by **Rajiv Goyal**, and an industry article on Fashion Sourcing by **Anchal Jain**, who wrote: "The only way a multibrand, multi-product retailer can provide the 'right choice' to the customer is by being fashion-literate himself." The insights were sharp and remain relevant to this day. Sample this from Heritage founder, the great **Ravi Nanda**: "Rather than being a follower of consumer demands, it is better to mold tastes by setting trends."

There were over 24 advertisements in that debut issue itself. How did I get them? I think none of the brands I pitched to refused simply because the idea itself was too radical! They were clearly very curious as to what was being created here and were carried away with my passion and conviction of the idea!

The lovely 'Santoor girl' **Priya Kakkar** graced the cover of IMAGES' first ever product, and the then-Minister of State for Textiles **Shri Ashok Gehlot**, kindly sent a congratulatory note, which was published in the magazine.



From a time when product durability was king to now, when 'fashion' has taken over 'product', India's fashion consumption story is an epic tale. As I look back, I feel overwhelmed, and filled with a sense of wonder, that IMAGES has been not just a cataloguer, but also a catalyst in many ways, in promoting the knowledge and the intelligence that drives retail today.

Because, in the years that followed, IMAGES' world expanded fast -- from fashion retail as a subject to Retail as a universe. My own understanding was shaped, enriched by some incredible visionaries and pioneers, including **B S Nagesh** (who launched the first Shoppers Stop store in Andheri the same year as our story began); **Kishore Biyani**, the game-changer of mass retail; Madura Garments' **Vikram Rao**; Siyaram Silk Mills' **Ramesh Poddar**; Tata Group's **Simone Tata**; Landmark Group's **Renuka Jagtiani** and **Raza Beig**; **Anuj Puri** (then at Chesterton Meghraj and until recently, JLL India head); **Krish Iyer** (then at Piramyd Retail and now the head of Walmart in India) and many other amazing leaders who have each played a role in modern Indian retail's creation.

For me, along the way, there have also been many losses and misses in this 25-year-old pursuit of passion. (In a related note, have you seen The Pursuit of Happiness? Watch it!) But then, the word passion is derived from a Latin word meaning 'to suffer'. If you have a genuine passion for something, you will also suffer for it. If you're lucky enough to find a passion that consumes your every living breath, you must also be prepared to let go of some things that you don't want to lose.

Has the journey been worth it? *Well...*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amitabh'.

Amitabh Taneja
Founder

IMAGES
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Editor in Chief: **Amitabh Taneja**
 Editorial Director: **R S Roy**
 Publisher: **S P Taneja**
 Chief Operating Officer: **Bhaves H Pitroda**

Editorial

Editor in charge: **Sanjay Kumar**
 Correspondent: **Nibedita Roy**

Conference Content: **Nakul Jain, Mohua Roy**

Contributing Editors: **Zainab S Kazi, Namita Bhagat**

Creatives

Art Director: **Pawan Kumar Verma**
 Dy. Art Director: **Deepak Verma**
 Sr. Layout Designer: **Naresh Kumar**

Production

Sr. General Manager: **Manish Kadam**
 Sr. Executive: **Ramesh Gupta**

Support

Sr. General Manager - Administration: **Rajeev Mehandru**

Subscription

Asst. Manager-Subscriptions: **Kiran Rawat**

ADVERTISING

Business Head

Rakesh Gambhir, Convenor, India Food Forum
 E: rakeshgambhir@imagesgroup.in | M: +91 9910001375

Lokesh Arora, Vice President

E: lokesharora@imagesgroup.in | M: +91 9999033612

DELHI	Ekta Roy , Sr. Manager
MUMBAI	Waseem Ahmad , VP & Branch Head Savita Vasandi , Sr. Manager
BENGALURU	Suvir Jaggi , VP & Branch Head Ashraf Alom , Dy. Manager
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**FOR ADVERTISING QUERIES,
 PLEASE WRITE TO salesfood@imagesgroup.in**

CONSUMER CONNECT

Anil Nagar, Vice President

E: anilnagar@imagesgroup.in | M: +91 9811333099

Membership Team: **Priti Kapil**
Sarika Gautam **Priyanka Sagar**

IMAGES MULTIMEDIA PVT. LTD. (CIN:- U22122DL2003PTC120097)

Registered Office: S-21, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase II, New Delhi 110020, India

T: +91-11-40525000 **IF:** +91-11-40525001 **IE:** info@imagesgroup.in **IW:** www.imagesgroup.in

Mumbai: 1st Floor, Plot No. 111 / 3, Marol Co-Operative Industrial Estate, Marol, Andheri (East). Mumbai - 400059.
T: +91-22-28508070 / 71 **IF:** +91-22-28508072

Kolkata: 30-B, Anil Roy Road, Ground Floor, Kolkata - 700 029
T: +91-33-40080480 **IF:** +91-33-40080440

Bengaluru: 523, 7th Cross, 10th Main (Jeevanbhima Nagar Main Road), H.A.L. 3rd Stage, Bengaluru - 560075
T: +91-80-41255172, 41750595/96 **IF:** +91-80-41255182

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Phone: + 49 69 759501; **Fax:** + 49 69 75951510

Editor-in-Chief: Gretel Weiss
(gretel.weiss@dfv.de)

Division Manager: Christiane Pretz
(christiane.pretz@dfv.de)



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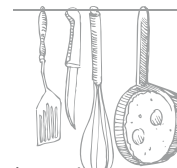
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5 Lorette

5 Lorette

Betty Nu Food

Good Food, Clean Conscience



FRANCE

Vegetarianism and veganism were long considered in Europe as ascetic and prohibition-obsessed lifestyles, propagated by only a small group. For some years now, however, the industrialisation of foodstuff production from animal sources and concern about diminishing resources have caused more and more people, particularly young people, often in urban environments, to give up food and beverages which may cause harm to animals. Restaurant owners offering their guests solely vegan food are niche operators, but they are growing in number, and now you can enjoy the best food and drink, not in self-denial, but with a good conscience.

Ranging from flexitarians and vegetarians to the purist, hard-line practitioners that go by the name of vegans and who eat no meat, no fish, no meat products, no eggs or egg products and no dairy products, there is a growing proportion of restaurant customers who are looking for vegetable dishes as part of the food they eat away from home, either occasionally or on a permanent basis. With a reputation for its uncompromising stance, the L214 association created the VegOresto site in 2015, which currently has 525 catering establishments on its books (restaurants, hotels, food trucks, bakeries).

They have all signed up to the VegOresto (www.vegoresto.fr) charter, which commits them to serve vegan alternatives every day; this entitles them to display the VegOresto symbol in the window to highlight their vegan and vegetarian dishes. Of this group, 187 restaurants are 100% vegan and/or vegetarian, with a minimum of at least one completely vegan option on the menu. 338 are 'mixed' – which means that they offer meat dishes as well as the vegan menu.

"Those chefs we have canvassed, who do not yet have menus with 100% vegan dishes, are concerned about exactly how to make it work. 'What food would I be able to offer?' There is often a trial period in the kitchen to start with, so as to be able to try out new techniques, new products, new textures and allow the staff to let their imaginations loose on this new approach," explains Bérénice Riaux, Campaign Manager at VegOresto. She continues: "The question that keeps recurring is that of sourcing; where do you find products that change things and that create a surprise? Where do you find practical alternatives for everyday things in a restaurant – mayonnaise, chantilly cream, ice cream? Where do you find vegetable 'milk', vegetable 'cream', vegan cheese? At the moment, in France, suppliers for the hospitality industry offer only a limited number of alternatives of this kind; we hope that

BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS

- **Chains:** Most purely vegan restaurants tend to be small individual outfits. Many concepts, however, report a significant ambition to grow, or have already multiplied.
- **Culinary spectrum:** From street food to fine dining.
- **Locations:** Veganism is a city phenomenon in Europe. Here a relatively large number of vegan offers come together. Vegans from the country often put up with long journeys to eat at a restaurant without animal produce.
- **The operators:** Most are vegans themselves, learned to cook without animal products for that reason, and have developed their own recipes in a creative way.
- **Mission:** The desire to convert other people to the vegan lifestyle is mostly not a central motive, but it does play a part and sometimes creates strong opposition from meat eaters. Veganism is a subject of political controversy.
- **Guests:** Frequently, despite giving up animal products, many vegetarians, allergy sufferers and even omnivores – in many places up to 80%.
- **Supply:** Strongly growing range of vegan convenience and ready-made products over the last few years. Nevertheless many restaurant operators place the main emphasis on their own production – for quality and price.
- **Meat-substitute products:** At snack counters they are vital (sausages, burgers, escallops). More sophisticated concepts rely rather on creative vegetable cuisine.
- **Transparency:** Of above-average importance. Questions about ingredients and additives must be answered by trained staff.
- **Vegan options:** Can be found on more and more menus, opening up new potential turnover.



in a few months from now, these few specialised supply chains will extend their ranges of vegan products in response to this ever growing demand."

How, then, can we recognise a 'true' vegan restaurant concept? "If you want to go down the 'healthy' path, you go organic," confirms Rina Azria, owner of the 5 Lorette restaurant in Paris (9th arrondissement). Her 35-seater restaurant has been open for a year and is full every lunchtime. The menu is 100% organic and offers no meat at all. All products are gluten and lactose free and all cooking is done from scratch on the premises ('fait maison'). The menu, which changes every fortnight, is built round 4 starters (€8), 4 mains (€15.5) and 4 desserts (€8). Velouté, gazpacho, salad and savoury tarts: the ingredients of the starters change according to season. During the week, there is a set lunch menu with starter and main, or main and dessert at €21. The restaurant opens three times a week in the evening. "Vegan customers are gratified to find a menu that fits in with their philosophy. The others are content to eat vegan food; they know that there will be an appropriate nutritional balance on their plate and that they will not go hungry. On top of that, the fact that it's organic and made from scratch is seen as a guarantee of quality," the owner explains. There are three indispensable items of equipment in pride of place in the kitchen of her chef Faical Ouertani: the cold extractor for juices, the mixer for sauces and smoothies and the dehydrator for slow cooking, which preserves the vitamins and nutrients.

Rina Azria is not going to be content to leave things as they are. "In the medium term, I should like to find another place, near to this one, to put in an organic grocery store and a take-away restaurant." She is also planning to develop a catering service; so convinced is she of the potential demand (especially from companies).

www.5lorette.fr

"In my view, a genuine concept must be based on a personal lifestyle choice, so that it is something that lasts and is authentic. An ethical commitment is an absolute requirement, a sine

A vegan concept for a restaurant absolutely must be based on organic ingredients, so as to promote sustainable lifestyles that respect the earth and its people.





At 55 rue des Archives à Paris (3rd arrondissement), the Hank concept promotes vegan cuisine through one of the iconic items of fast food, the burger.

qua non," adds Thuy-Ha Bui, Raw Chef for vegan cuisine and patisserie. She is the young woman who writes the blog at www.toques-de-cru.com; she provides catering services for raw vegan food in France and Switzerland. She continues: "A vegan concept for a restaurant absolutely must be based on organic ingredients, so as to promote sustainable lifestyles that respect the earth and its people. The choice of gluten/lactose free and vegan also allows us to explore a new and extremely inventive kind of 'nouvelle cuisine', where vegetables are allowed to come into their own and where flavours are not masked through the addition of fatty animal products, not to mention the moral position vis-à-vis the animal kingdom." As far as the preparation is concerned, putting the principles into practice requires specific skills, all the more so if the food is served raw. "The main constraint is the need for extremely fresh vegetables, particularly if we are talking about raw food; an item that is not fresh stands out immediately, whilst cooking can hide a certain lack of freshness," stresses Thuy-Ha Bui. Cooks who want to put 100% vegan recipes on their menu must learn to "make vegetables the stars of the plate; vegetables are no longer the accompaniment, they are the centrepiece, and everything develops around and from their flavour, colour, texture and shape."

Cécile Van Lith is a caterer in Paris. Her brand - 'Betty Nu Food' - relies on high-quality vegan dishes, both cooked and raw. Bright, sumptuous and colourful, her culinary creations drive a

coach and horses through traditional ideas of veggie cuisine and are set off to best advantage by appropriate presentation. Launched at the beginning of 2014, the business has made steady progress, efficiently supported by word-of-mouth recommendation, particularly in artistic and fashion circles. A young female entrepreneur, her strategy to keep ahead of the numerous competitors, who are trying to position themselves on the vegan bandwagon, is to move even further upmarket and to diversify. She is giving herself about a year to adjust her focus. "We are going to open up a bit towards a more individualised target group. We have a plan for home deliveries of lunch boxes," Cécile Van Lith explains. At the same time, she expects, in the medium term, to open an outlet for ready-to-go food. "I want to perform a little magic on people, surprise them and get them to actually like recipes that would never have attracted them spontaneously," explains Cécile Van Lith, a former naturopath, who trained with professional chefs. "We currently work to order, for a minimum of around fifteen people." All the preparation is done in the production laboratory, with the finishing touches often being added at the last minute in the venue, where the food is being served. "Everything is done by hand; of course, there is a cost to it, but our customers fully understand that," she continues. www.bettynufood.com

At 55 rue des Archives à Paris (3rd arrondissement), the Hank concept promotes vegan cuisine through one of the iconic items of fast food, the burger. Behind it is Pierre Doléans, a vegetarian globe trotter turned committed vegan, who launched his restaurant idea in 2013. With five associates - Virginie Pelletier, Agnes Billet, Julie Huguen, Alexandre Fiault, Cyril Bouthors - he opened Hank Vegan Burger in January 2014. On the menu are vegan burgers, i.e. without any animal or animal-related products whatsoever. They are made with a lightly toasted fresh bun, thin slices of fresh tomato, finely chopped red onion, pickled gherkins and crunchy salad, with melted vegan cheese. Inside is an organic 'steak' made with fresh vegetables (carrots, beans, mushrooms) and tofu. Five different sauces individualise the burgers. Open 7 days a week from noon to 10 pm, the 25-seater restaurant reports an average of 300 customers a day, of which a third buy take-aways. There are two set offers: burger + side order (salad or potatoes) + organic beverage at €12, or €13 with a dessert. "The burgers are made to order, the salads, potatoes and desserts are prepared on site - all except for the sorbets," explains Agnès Billet. She goes on: "Ours is a mixed clientele. We want to bring vegans together round our vegan food, but we also want to see people who aren't vegans, but who enjoy trying something different, that is good quality and full of flavour." H.A.N.K.? It stands for Have A Nice Karma, a theme echoed by Hank Vegan Pizza, a second establishment opened by the six partners, two months ago, in the same district. This time they have chosen to operate with pizza based on vegan cheese. www.hankburger.com



SPAIN

Fad? Fashion? Trend? Or more? The last! For both players and experts are convinced: the vegan style of diet is here to stay – even if, or precisely because, in a land of enthusiastic meat-eaters, it's not having an easy time. So devotees are particularly devoted and part-time fans have needed to come to terms actively with the maxims of purely vegetable diet. There are no purely vegan all-Spain formulas as yet, but vegetarian or flexitarian concepts like Teresa Carles or Flax&Kale in Barcelona are competing all the more briskly with special offers for vegans. Many of these have been founded recently or very recently, most are managed by individual entrepreneurs who, located in districts with a high visitor ratio, have targeted mainly local, diet-aware people and people working nearby, not primarily tourists. Their guests tend all to be young to middle-aged, they are of both sexes and prepared to shell out €20 for a visit.

It is interesting that the conceptualisation of the vegan streaming, unlike other trends, has not

taken its rise in the major cities of Barcelona or Madrid, but in Valencia. This may be due to the fact that the East of the country is rich in fruit and vegetables, enticing for a cuisine based on foodstuffs without animal contents.

Pioneering status in this area goes to the formula Mio Bio, which describes itself as an "organic healthy restaurant and school". Opened in 2010 by vegan chef Emanuela Gornati and Sergio Brisa in a central location, this casual-dining address, furnished in warm colours like beige, white and black, influenced by feng-shui principles and built in sustainable materials, is a restaurant as well as a teaching centre. Balanced, healthy cuisine is served – the products are 100% organic, fresh and seasonal, hardly processed, and suitable for vegans or guests with food allergies. At midday the charge is by weight, in the evening à la carte. Best sellers are the salad with quinoa, dried tomatoes and avocado, plus the organic burger with seitan and caramelised onions. The lunch menu will cost you an average of €12.50; for à la carte the bill will be around €22.50. In the afternoons the restaurant is transformed into a school, with courses on healthy diet, including exclusively vegan diet, plus dietary advice. Estimated turnover is €350,000.

www.miobio.eu

SPAIN: RESTAURANTS WITH MAINLY VEGAN OFFERS

Madrid:

- Botanique
- La Encomienda
- Loving Hut
- Punto Vegano
- Rayen Vegano

Barcelona:

- Celerí
- Espiritual Chef (book)
- Gopal
- Sopa
- Vegetart
- Veggie Garden

Valencia:

- Copenhagen
- Kimpira
- Mio Bio
- Nomit
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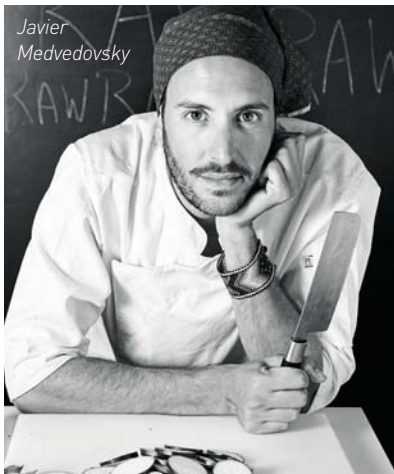
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It is interesting that the conceptualisation of the vegan streaming, unlike other trends, has not taken its rise in the major cities of Barcelona or Madrid, but in Valencia.

From an individual enterprise to a multiple idea with a Scandinavian name, despite Spanish 'authorship.' After all, the units run by Celia Aragó and Olga Vazquez since 2009 operate under the name of Copenhagen (Valencia and Madrid), Malmoe, Oslo and Helsinki. In the casual-dining restaurants, furnished altogether in a highly minimalist style, avowedly based on healthy, vegetarian diet and a symbiosis between a pleasant Danish-style spatial feeling and a culinary feel-good maxim, a creative Mediterranean cuisine is served which can easily be interpreted as vegan. Popular dishes are the 'Oslo salad' of pumpkin, potato, dried tomato, quinoa, [vegetarian] soy mayonnaise and boletus, or the 'quesadilla', stuffed with cheddar cheese, seitan and seasonal vegetables on Lebanese bread, served with pisto. The average bill is less than 20; estimated system-wide turnover 1.1 m. grupocopenhagen.com

In the North of Spain Bilbao is the area for vegan formulas. One of these is Gustu, opened in 2010 by Nieves Urrutia in the city centre. Under the motto 'organic healthy cuisine', the pharmacy graduate advises, teaches and cooks for her guests in a small room with student-type, self-made wooden benches and in an adjoining 'school.' It is interesting that Urrutia employs only

VEGANISM IN EUROPE

"Since the 2000s, if not before, vegetarianism has been a 'blossoming field of study' in the cultural and social sciences. Today, the Gallup Institute and other major national opinion poll research institutes are talking about 'only' 1% vegans, 5% vegetarians and around 10-15% flexitarians in Western Europe and the USA. But it is clear that discussion of the topic is becoming more and more widespread in the media and that the number of products sold in the retail trade has grown significantly in recent years.

Since the first vegetarian society was founded in 1847 and the first vegan society in 1947 – both in Great Britain – the veggie movement has often been labelled as a rigid form of asceticism and anti-hedonism by traditional gourmets. Whilst this label for the founders of the movement, with their strong connection to the anti-alcohol and raw-food movements, was probably right, today only a few religiously strict veg* gastronomes keep to this ascetic path.

The intensified public debate about vegetarianism and veganism first came to prominence on the cover of Time magazine in 2002 with the headline, 'Should we all be vegetarians?' However, it was not until the autumn of 2009, with the publication of J. Foers' book 'Eating Animals', that this topic became the subject of fervent debate in all the relevant feature pages round the world.

Over the last 20 years, vegetarianism and now veganism have become a trendy lifestyle choice for the younger middle class and city dwellers. There is a growing range of vegetarian and vegan gourmet food on offer – if we are to believe the website Happycow.net/europe, there are now 10,000 outlets in Europe alone. According to the food experts at the British Guardian newspaper, this also means that, whilst, up to now, vegetarian food has never really been synonymous with fine dining, vegetarians have recently acquired many more options for upscale gastronomic experiences.

So, in recent years, a number of vegetarian restaurants have been recommended in the Gault Millau and Michelin guides for the first time. In 2015, there followed the first distinction to be awarded in Europe to a purely vegan restaurant.

What is particularly interesting economically for the restaurant trade as a whole, however, is the specific group of so-called flexitarians: people who still eat meat and fish, but who also find considerable appeal in high-quality, creative veg* dishes and who are willing to pay for them. Thus the inclusion of creative vegan dishes can help the restaurant trade to foster stronger brand loyalty amongst a consumer segment, that loves to experiment with new food and that also has, for the most part, high purchasing power."

Erwin Lengauer, member of the cultural and social-science department's vegetarian studies focus group at the University of Vienna, with a special research interest in bioethics. fewd.univie.ac.at

female staff. The daily menus, the weekend menu and the tasting menu are based on local, seasonal products, which are refined creatively. There are 100% vegetarian or 100% animal-free dishes. Best sellers are the vegan 'Gustuburgers' for €13.50. The guests? 'Millennials', meaning aged 35 and younger. Turnover? Estimated at around €300,000. www.gustubilbao.com

Now where shall we go in Madrid? One idea is the Botanique, managed by Nacho Sánchez, at which the most popular dishes include the algae salad, the noquis with tomatoes, the lasagne,

and the 'tarte velvet.' The graduate psychologist opened this vegetarian jewel under the umbrella of the market hall of Antón Martín in April 2015 as a result of his passion for healthy diet, and its menu includes numerous 'raw' ingredients, meaning only cooked under 42 degrees, because in this way all the characteristics of the foodstuffs are best respected and come to the fore. As for price, Sánchez's offers will cost €9.50 (without dessert) and €11 (with dessert). botanique.es

Earlier in the market was the Loving Hut chain under the direction of Ching Hai from Vietnam, which, along with the capital, also runs branches in Valencia and Málaga. The international formula of vegan Asian cuisine is a pioneer of a setting consisting of 'relaxed' internal decor and a menu adapted to the tastes of the local clientele. The outlet in Madrid can accommodate 45 guests – the average bill there is around €10. www.lovinghut.es

In Barcelona, along with notable concepts, it is above all the young Argentine chef Javier Medvedovsky who, following jobs at well-known Spanish establishments, has been increasingly the main ideas man in 'crude vegan cuisine' through his recipe book, 'Espiritual Chef', published this year. In this work, along with the right treatment, processing, germination and dehydration of vegan and vegetarian raw

ingredients, he describes the extraction of juices and fermentation, plus suggestions for macerating, marinating and steeping. "Diet is a spiritual journey," he says and teaches this view on courses and through his mobile street-food outlet. His recipes have already found a favourable response on the menus of numerous restaurants which now offer dishes featuring algae, humus, avocado, cabbage, linseed seeds or tamari. espiritualchef.com

If you don't want to cook yourself, in the capital of Catalonia you will have for instance an opportunity to taste vegetarian and vegan food in Sopa. The casual-dining formula, launched in 2010, with a local atmosphere, offers vegan sandwiches and baguette snacks even at breakfast – for instance with date jam or tofu paste, and in the meantime there are tartlets, biscuits or desserts – plus a daily menu for €9.90 with a selection of two courses, consisting of four soups, two salads and three hot dishes, some of them with a 'micro-organic' slant. The popular dishes are soups, particularly those with pumpkin, carrots, ginger and cinnamon, lentils or artichokes. Of the main courses, the most frequently ordered is the seitan hamburger with plum and almond spinach. Along with the restaurant, Sopa has a shop selling organic

In the North of Spain Bilbao is the area for vegan formulas. One of these is Gustu, opened in 2010 by Nieves Urrutia in the city centre.



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products, a children's section and a yoga-practice area. Along with Barcelona, the concept has an outlet in Madrid and two on Bali.

sopa.vg/en

Likewise not purely vegan but definitely noteworthy is Celerí, adjacent to the Avenida Diagonal, the brainchild of Guido Weinberg, owner of the Woki restaurant chain and the Woki organic supermarkets, which retail organic products. Directing the kitchen is Xavier Pellicer, who trained at various Michelin restaurants and who, using selected organic vegetables, provides the menu jointly with other cooks. Dishes feature about eight seasonal vegetables, which Pellicer reinterprets in three versions, one vegan, one vegetarian, and one third for those who eat animal protein. Food is prepared not out of sight but visibly in the eating area – including maximum transparency and interaction with the guests. Pellicer, influenced partly by the doctrines of the Ayurveda, sees diet in a holistic way, which does not preclude the biodynamic cultivation of raw ingredients in accordance with the lunar calendar. The environment is relaxedly

modern – iron, wood and stone predominate in the selection of materials. Tables are shared here, and the exchange of ideas is encouraged to flow. The lunch menu costs €25, the tasting menu €50, and the à la carte is available for about €45. Frequently ordered are the cereal gazpacho with vegetable cubes, grilled cabbage, served cold with Indian mustard oil, radish and marinated onions, or brioche made of coco-rice milk. Estimated turnover? €400,000 – the share of vegan dishes is estimated at 90% of food earnings.

www.tribuwoki.com/en/restaurante/celeri

The future outlook for the concepts based on vegan diet is promising: young people are more motivated to practice a meat-free and/or purely vegetable diet; it is obvious that people are re-thinking. More than any price reduction directed to the guest, the task currently is to optimise purchasing. And vegan and vegetarian concepts should dare to move more into the centre of towns and cities. Along with tapas bars and big players in the fast-food business, the USP of such formulas could enjoy a far higher profile.



AUSTRIA

The future outlook for the concepts based on vegan diet is promising: young people are more motivated to practice a meat-free and/or purely vegetable diet; it is obvious that people are re-thinking.

According to the Vegan Society, the proportion of vegetarians in Austria rose between 2005 and 2013 from 2.9 to 9% of the population. The Society believes that vegans account for between 10 and 50% of vegetarians, thus cautiously estimating the category of people who do totally without animal products at about 80,000 – 1% of the Austrian population. This includes more women than men, though the number of men, it says, is rising sharply: the ratio of young people and those with advanced educational qualifications in particular is higher in relation to the population as a whole. According to the Society, most vegans live in Vienna.

Accordingly the geographic focus of the 46 restaurants specialising in purely vegan dishes in Austria as listed on the Society's website likewise falls on Vienna, with a good two dozen providers. But in other major cities such as Salzburg, Innsbruck, Graz, Klagenfurt and Linz, too, vegans will now find concepts in which every animal product is avoided.

One of the pioneers of vegan catering in the Alpine Republic was Charly Schillinger, who in 1988 converted his parents' two-hundred year old inn initially into a vegetarian restaurant, and ten years later into a vegan one. Jointly with his wife Irene he has developed alternatives to Austrian plain cooking which are free of animal products. His motto: vegan cuisine should mean healthy eating, not dogmatic rejection, and so at Schillinger's there are purely vegetable versions



of schnitzel, goose and cordon bleu at moderate prices of between €10 and 15 for the main course. These are ordered by guests 80% of whom are not total vegans, come from all over Austria, and sometimes will wait several weeks for a table.

In 2015 in Vienna the Schillingers launched their vegan burger chain Swing Kitchen, and recently the third branch – the first to be managed as a franchise – opened in Vienna's Shopping City Süd. Experts with experience at McDonald's and Vapiano helped to develop the concept, and two further outlets are due to join the network next spring, one of them in a former McDonald's branch in Vienna, the other in Graz. Berlin, too, is on the expansion plan, which expressly envisages international growth, abroad preferably via multi-unit franchising.

The menu includes four different burgers with soya patties or vegan schnitzel (solo from €5.20, as a menu from €7.90), plus wraps with falafel or vegan schnitzel filling, plus salads and side

dishes. Wherever possible, the ingredients come from the region and from non-genetically modified cultivation; some carry the bio or fair-trade seal. All packaging consists of sustainable raw materials and is CO₂ neutral. The Swing Kitchen website shows the visitor the resources saved since the first restaurant was opened: thanks to purely vegetable ingredients, around 43 ml of water, 260,000 t of CO₂, 560,000 kg of grain and leguminous plants, and more than 900,000 sq m of agricultural land (as of November 2016) have not been needed or have not been produced.

With this morally-aware cuisine Swing Kitchen is attracting a broad public, mainly women aged between 20 and 40 – only a few of whom, however, are complete vegetarians or vegans. According to the company, the restaurants – which have seating for at least 50 – place ten times this number of covers between 11 am and 10 pm.

www.swingkitchen.com

Likewise designed for expansion is Yamm!, a chain of vegetarian and vegan restaurants founded in 2011, which opened its first outlet on 750 sq m on the Universitätsring in Vienna City Centre and now has branches at the Praterstern traffic intersection and on the Vienna Naschmarkt. Under the management of capped chef Walter Schulz, Yamm! interprets Mediterranean, Asian and



classic Austrian dishes at a high level and without animal products.

The heart of the restaurant is the buffet island, featuring hors d'oeuvres, salads, main courses and snacks, which are charged by weight (in-house €2.95, take-away €2.75 per 100 g). Soups, bread, pastries and desserts are ordered directly from the staff. In the morning there is a selection of breakfasts (€7.90-9.90), which can be supplemented with individual components (e.g. vegan rice pudding). Sweets and cakes, frequently also vegan, come from the in-house patisserie. Since May 2015 some of the bakery products, plus a selection of Yamm! dishes, can be found in Merkur supermarkets.

"The Yamm! concept was designed for expansion from the very start. Though not as a

According to the Vegan Society, the proportion of vegetarians in Austria rose between 2005 and 2013 from 2.9 to 9% of the population.



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Traditional Viennese classics and examples of traditional sweet-flour dishes are as much a part of the menu as international evergreens. About half of all the food is vegan, including the soup of the week and the dishes of the day on Thursdays. And vegan diet is promoted through campaigns on World Vegan Day.

restaurant chain with dishes as standardised as possible and uniform image and presentation. Instead, starting in Austria and abroad in a few years, various outlets will introduce the Yamm! philosophy, enjoyment of food and joie de vivre, to our guests," explains founder Dr. Markus Teufel. www.yamm.at

As a lighthouse of quality in vegetarian and vegan cuisine in Austria comes TIAN. At this restaurant in Vienna's Himmelpfortstrasse, Austria's only star-capped chef specialising in meatless cuisine is in charge of the kitchen: Paul Ivic. 90% of guests are meat-eaters and, when visiting TIAN, deliberately do without it, to discover how very much vegetarian food can extend the culinary range. A branch was opened in 2013 in the Vienna Kunsthaus, in the shape of the TIAN Bistro, a more traditional and deliberately more populist outlet; a further branch has been open since 2015 on the Spittelberg. These restaurants interpret traditional Viennese plain cooking in a modern way, without meat. Traditional Viennese classics and examples of traditional sweet-flour dishes are as much a part of the menu as international evergreens. About half of all the food is vegan, including the soup of the week and the dishes of the day on Thursdays. And vegan diet is promoted through campaigns on World Vegan Day.



SWITZERLAND

According to the Swiss Vegan Association, around one percent of the Swiss population is vegan. Independently of this, interest in vegan food has increased significantly over recent years, as shown by the growing range of vegan dishes in supermarkets and restaurants, says the society on its website.

At all events, Zurich has been a magnet for vegetarians for over 100 years as the birthplace of Hiltl, the western world's oldest vegetarian restaurant. Owner Rolf Hiltl represents the fourth generation of the family to run the business.

With seating for over 500 guests on two floors, the flagship restaurant in Zurich's Sihlstrasse was opened in 1898 and nowadays welcomes an average of 2,000 guests a day, who either serve themselves at the buffet of home-made hot and cold dishes or enjoy being served vegetarian food by attentive waiters. According to Rolf Hiltl, the share of completely vegan dishes has been rising for several years.

Despite its venerable age, the restaurant is anything but old-fashioned. On the contrary, it offers something for everyone with take-away

The TIAN business includes an organic market garden, where the ingredients are produced ecologically not just for the TIAN kitchens. In 2014 TIAN opened at the Viktualienmarkt in Munich, with chef Christop Mezger, one of Germany's most talented young entrants to the profession, in charge of the kitchen; he recently gained his first cap and 14 Gault-Millau points. www.taste-tian.com

A small but unusual niche is occupied by 'sushi pirate' Alexander Lengyel. His concept, Pirata Sushi, does entirely without fish, instead using avocado, mango, salad, cucumber, sweet potato and other kinds of fruit and vegetables. Neither a vegetarian nor a vegan himself, Lengyel – whose parents run a number of sushi restaurants in São Paulo – follows a simple principle: fish only if the quality is 100% right. "And good fish is very hard to find in Vienna."

The small restaurant in the Seventh District fills a gap for all vegetarians and vegans who so far have had to do without sushi. His creations, such as Honolulu maki (bananas, rucola, black sesame, 4 pieces at €4.50) or zuccamaki (pickled zucchini and sesame, four pieces at €4.80) are much appreciated by fish-eaters, too. With only six seats, the focus is on take-away business and a delivery service (foodora). Lengyel is in search of 'bold' investors and 'adventurous' franchise partners for expansion! www.pirata-sushi.at



options, a bar-lounge and dance club. In addition to the Sihlstrasse restaurant, Hiltl can be found in the Jelmoli department store in Bahnhofstrasse and, during the summer months, at the Mythenquai and Kilchberg lidos. Additionally, the company has its own Hiltl Shop with vegi-butcher's next door to the flagship restaurant. There, alternatives to meat, such as tofu, seitan, tempeh, Quorn and paneer are freshly prepared and cut to customers' requirements. The shop also sells a wide range of soya sausages, such as bratwurst and Frankfurters.

In the spring of this year, another Hiltl restaurant with buffet, take-away, bar-lounge and seating for 100 guests indoors and outdoors covering 250 sq m was opened in the 'Sihlpost' building, an old post office building on Zurich's future Europaplatz. This will be followed by a new outlet in the city's Langstrasse, also with buffet, take-away und terrace. Additionally,

Hiltl is represented in all three classes on intercontinental flights operated by Swiss International Airlines. www.hiltl.ch

In 2000, the Hiltl family joined forces with brothers Reto, Daniel and Christian Frei to launch the tibits vegetarian fast-casual concept, which currently has eight units in Switzerland and one in London. The concept is based on the buffet principle with a choice of over 40 home-made vegetarian and vegan salads, hot dishes, desserts and soups, including vegan specialities such as Tandoori Tofu, Maniok Tikka Masala and Black Teff Burger. Customers pay by weight: CHF4.20 per 100 g or CHF3.70 for takeaways. Around 80 % of dishes are fully plant-based. On Vegan Tuesdays, all dishes from the buffet, including salads and desserts, are vegan from 10 in the morning. www.tibits.ch, www.tibits.co.uk

Radical & rock 'n' roll! Sisters Elif and Sibel Erisik come from a Turkish-Croatian family of restaurateurs and, since September 2014, have

from CHF19.50 to 23.50) with new creations being introduced every couple of months.

In the afternoon, the assortment is supplemented by cake, muffins, tarts and tiramisu. From 6 pm, a variety of set meals are added to the menu. At the 'Burger Bash' on Saturdays (11 am to 3 pm), the menu includes savoury snacks, breakfast and desserts in addition to three burgers with wheat buns. www.ellenbelle.ch

Opened in 2013, it claims to be Switzerland's first vegan bio-restaurant: Amazing Strength and the associated Vegetateria in Zurich. The people, animal and nature-friendly concept philosophy is based in the spiritual teachings of Sri Chinmoy. In addition to more than 20 different varieties of vegan ice cream, seven to ten vegan dishes are offered every day at the 75-seat restaurant, e.g., bio-quality 'Zürcher Geschnetzeltes' from the buffet (100 g à CHF3.90), as well as soup, salad, desserts and a daily special dish. The operator is Soyana, a company that has been producing alternative



Elle'n Belle



been serving vegan cuisine at Elle'n'Belle, their 120-seat, fullservice restaurant with its veteran furniture and innumerable knick-knacks at Zurich's Limmatplatz. Under their motto, 'It's vegan, Baby!', the sisters took third place in the Trends category of the 2015 Swiss Gastro Awards. Additionally, Elle'n'Belle came first in the Best Restaurant category and was the overall winner at this year's Swiss Vegan Awards.

Fast food, Asian cuisine, superfoods, 'veganised' classic und traditional dishes are mixed with gay abandon at Elle'n'Belle. The only prerequisite: the food must be fresh, organic whenever possible and, in particular, tasty. "For us, pleasure and quality are more important than strict adherence to the super-healthy principle," explains Sibel Erisik. "And that's the reason why many non-vegans – from bankers to punkers – come to us – some of them even turn up wearing a fur coat!" She estimates that around 60% of guests are meat eaters and around 30% vegetarian.

The modest menu is changed four times a year. The signature product is the vegan 'Daddy Cool' wheat gluten doner kebab, which uses a secret blend of spices created by the sisters' late father. 'Daddy Cool' is served with 'Funky Fries' and costs CHF21.50. At lunchtimes, there is a special menu (depending on ingredients, the prices range

milk drinks, tofu and other vegan products for over 35 years. There is also a choice of around 100 Soyana products for sale in the restaurant. The ice cream is made without white sugar, preserving agents and artificial colour using soya or rice milk, almond purée, dates and whole-cane sugar. For hot dishes, Soyana products, such as spelt-based meat substitute Dinki, and vegan cream-cheese alternative Soyana are used. www.vegetateria.ch

"No imitations. Just creative cuisine" is the motto of the Marktküche fine-dining restaurant, opened in August 2014 in Zurich. Accordingly, the vegan restaurant (48 seats inside, 30 outside) uses no meat-substitute products whenever possible, preferring top quality vegetable and regional ingredients, such as home-made bread and pasta. The restaurant is aimed at a cosmopolitan clientele and focuses accordingly on light and quick lunches and an evening 5- or 7-course menu with an optional accompanying wine selection that is changed monthly. Prices start from CH89 for a five-course meal, which usually focuses on a special story or motto. www.marktkueche.ch ••

Contributing Authors

France: Lydie Anastassion

Spain: Mario Cañizal Villarino

Austria/Switzerland: BS

According to the Swiss Vegan Association, around one percent of the Swiss population is vegan. Independently of this, interest in vegan food has increased significantly over recent years, as shown by the growing range of vegan dishes in supermarkets and restaurants, says the society on its website.

Resurrecting the Butter Chicken

Television chef Saransh Goila launched a QSR dedicated to butter chicken in Mumbai last year, which has attracted widespread popularity since its opening.

by Nivedita Pawar



Saransh Goila

India's favourite dish – butter chicken – was fast losing its authenticity feels celebrity chef and author Saransh Goila who wanted to revive and restore the flavours of the dish. For Goila, butter chicken was much more than just another recipe he was trying to perfect. It was a subject that he felt deeply about, and perfecting the dish became an end in itself.

It all started as a catering college experiment by Goila and his mate (now co-founder) Vivek Sahani. "Growing up in a vegetarian family, I was raised on paneer butter masala. We had a secret recipe and it always stood out from the original. When I was studying in culinary school, I would often wonder how the same recipe would taste if cooked with chicken. To bring out that special flavour, we spent many dedicated hours to smoke the gravy to perfection and added some butter to allow the dish to burst its aroma as it coated the palate," says Goila.

After months of trials using traditional spices and culinary techniques, the duo was finally ready for the taste test. Family and friends were invited to taste the silky, moist chicken dunked in tomato gravy. It was an instant hit amongst all and before the duo could contain their excitement, '#GoilaButterChicken' was trending on Twitter, thus marking the beginning of an affair. Two years later, after hosting a TV cooking show and writing a travel book on Indian food, Goila launched its first outlet in Andheri, Mumbai, last year.

The Real Deal

Though Goila Butter Chicken is creamier and smokier than most butter chickens in the market, the young chef assures us that it's completely free of cream. "We made a decision to adhere to all ingredients au naturel. It's special smoking of the chicken that sets GBC apart from the rest. I add very little butter and no cream – which makes it a great and guilt-free indulgence," says the chef who hosted TV show Roti Rasta aur India and authored 'India On My Platter'.

The sweet tangy zing of the dish can be attributed completely to the fresh tomatoes and honey that make for the ingredient, while the ground cashew nuts impart a smooth creamy texture. Though butter chicken remains the star at

GBC, the menu also has butter chicken biryani, butter paneer biryani and a butter chicken roll too. Goila has also reinvented some of India's popular food items and given them a contemporary twist; for example, beet chaat, kebab chaat, mango rasgulla, etc. After much prodding, Goila reveals the secret of his much sought after butter chicken: a smoking-hot piece of charcoal doused with butter. "I let the smoke settle into the dish, but for not for more than seven or eight minutes. Too much smoke can be bad too," warns Goila.

Isn't it risky to make one dish the hero of the menu? "All the dishes in the menu have a personal touch to them. We have consciously made an effort to make each dish so special and unique that they stand out and are equally well received. Butter chicken was my first successful attempt at reinventing the original flavours of India whilst adding a personal touch to it, so it will always remain closest to my heart," explains Goila who is relying on social media to spread the word. "As for the marketing strategy, we want to package and present GBC as a Gen-X dish that reverberates the ideas and ethos of the cool and young."

Delivery Dynamics

GBC only caters to phone and online orders placed through their website www.goilabutterchicken.com. A fleet of two in-house riders and tie-ups with logistics partners, road-runners and Opinio along with Scootsy, Swiggy and Zomato assure a 40 minute delivery. The coal smoked butter chicken is packed in earthen pots and comes with accompaniments like roomali roti, dal and chutney.

"We plan to make Goila Butter Chicken a well-known house name. We hope to popularize it with this online delivery and take away venture. The aim is to make GBC popular all over India and slowly spread its wings internationally as well", reveals Vivek Sahani - Co-partners, Goila Butter Chicken Venture. ●●



GOILA BUTTER CHICKEN

Location: Andheri West, Mumbai. Near DN Road Metro Station

Menu: Apart from Goila Butter Chicken, the menu currently holds a host of other veg and non-veg dishes along with dessert.

Investment in the first outlet: Roughly Rs. 25 lakh

Equipment in the outlet: Three range burner, pulverizer, four door fridge, rumali roti burner and, of course, a tandoor. The kitchen can service three outlets.

Delivery model: Take away and deliveries.

Area of delivery: Andheri, Jogeshwari, Goregaon, Malad, Oshiwara, Santacruz.

Future plans: To invent more things fusion around butter chicken and create newer dishes which have butter chicken at their core.

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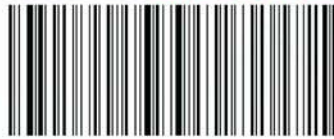
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Editorial Contacts

Surabhi Khosla
surabhikhosla@imagesgroup.in

Charu Lamba
charulamba@imagesgroup.in



Parvez Sheikh



Value- for- money- dining

In a candid conversation with Food Service India, **Parvez Sheikh**, F&B Manager, Hotel Marine Plaza, shares his views on how the F&B industry is changing in terms of services, food innovation and concepts.

Tell us about your F&B outlets, their formats and specialities?

The Oriental Blossom is one of Mumbai's finest specialty Chinese restaurants encompassing the cuisines of two most prolific regions in China – Szechwan and Cantonese. It focuses on a variety of flavours and use of original recipes. It sports earthy colors, bright interiors, wide glass windows, and a warm ambience that creates an atmosphere of elegance suitable for the discerning connoisseur. It also has two private rooms, which are ideal venues to hold confidential business lunches or dinners.

The Oriental Blossom's masterchef Huang Tae Sing was introduced to Chinese cuisine at a very young age by his father, also a Chinese masterchef. He was initiated in the art of creating and presenting Chinese cuisine in its most authentic form, yet catering to the contemporary taste buds of modern day patrons. His grasp of the Szechwan and Cantonese cooking styles is evident in all that Oriental Blossom offers.

Another outlet BayView is a 24 hour dining restaurant designed like a ship. It offers an exhilarating experience with a stunning view of the Arabian Sea. It is popular for its multi-faceted buffet meal that includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and a midnight buffet spread. Intimate, casual yet elegant, it's a perfect place to unwind while feasting on a gastronomic spread and taking in the spectacular view.

Geoffrey's caters to the people young at heart. It serves as an ideal place to mix business with pleasure or to just unwind after a hectic day. The who's who of the business world continue to patronize this popular pub. It offers a fine selection of Scotch, malts and wines combined with an interesting selection of international cuisine, which make Geoffrey's the ultimate pub experience.

All our three outlets thus have a unique and singular theme of their own. Geoffrey's is more of a British pub with some elements of a sports bar. Similarly, The Oriental Blossom specializes in Szechwan cuisine. However, we have further enhanced the China experience by including other cuisines from Cantonese and Hunan as well.

The BayView theme is about enjoying a buffet on a ship. The feeling you get is of cruising on the Arabian Sea on a ship with three different decks.



What has been the sales growth for your F&B outlets?

The sales growth for the outlets have increased sharply with an incremental growth of 10% compared to the previous year.

What are your typical offerings and your more novel products?

Our typical offerings are an à la carte menu with Indian and Continental cuisine and a at par buffet in our BayView restaurant. In terms of product novelty, most of our ingredients are imported and they include herbs, cheese, lamb, Parma ham, collection of wines and other ingredients that help to enhance our product offerings.

What have been your key innovations in food and beverage?

Our pizzas are served on a hot stone platter on the table to our guests so that the temperature remains the same even on coming out from the oven. The temperature remains the same for the next 20 minutes. Our second innovation is sandwiches served with shooters. Buffet starters are served on sizzler plates, molecular mocktails and mixology cocktails in test tubes and funnels, all of which add to the food and beverage enhancement for our guests.

What is your value-for-money proposition for diners and which are your key customer demographics?

The value for money proposition revolves around corporate, larger groups as well as families – Indian as well as foreigners. We get male and female guests from all age groups. Our menu is designed in such a way that it caters to kids to adults in all day dining and Chinese restaurants.

Our different offers, schemes, tie-ups play an important role in improving the footfall and in ensuring that we offer the best value for money.

In terms of product novelty, most of our ingredients are imported and they include herbs, cheese, lamb, Parma ham, collection of wines and other ingredients that help to enhance our product offerings.



Which are your top revenue grossing F&B outlets? How much of average sales per sq. ft. per day do they contribute and what are your targets for the future?

The Bay View and The Oriental Blossom contribute the major pie of our revenue. The average sales per square feet is Rs. 750 for BayView and Rs. 1,200 for The Oriental Blossom. However, we have plans to increase sales per square feet to Rs. 850 and Rs.1,300 respectively for these two outlets. We are working on achieving this by introducing various offers, focusing on website marketing and tie-ups with footfall generating companies.

We have introduced tapas style portions for our buffet spreads. It helps to sustain the presentation of the dish and also prevents food wastage that is common when large portions are served.



In your opinion, do you see any shift towards local flavors and regional cuisines vis-a-vis the international cuisines?

The trend as far as customer mix, taste and palate is concerned is 60:40. About 60% people who are not local prefer regional authentic cuisine. On the other hand, 40 per cent of the customers prefer fusion/ international cuisine. This is because people are now travelling all across the world and are developing taste buds that favour international cuisine. Hence, the demand for both local and exotic cuisines is growing and both segments have a strong potential to grow further .

What are the 'mindful dining' measures (sustainability, reduced food waste, etc) that you have introduced at your F&B outlets? To what extent have they helped you to cut costs?

We have introduced tapas style portions for our buffet spreads. It helps to sustain the presentation of the dish and also prevents food wastage that is common when large portions are served. Secondly, food is prepared only if there is a healthy order book. There is also more focus on non-moving

items and dead stock, which are cleared by using them for various offers like buy one get one free.

Earlier, our food cost had climbed up to 26% but after introducing these measures the cost has come down to 23% in all our outlets.

How has location helped fuel your growth?

We enjoy the Arabian sea view location, which is one of the USPs of our outlets. Secondly, being in the semi-business hub, we have PSUs, government offices and corporates in close proximity. Our location offers easy access to central and western railways, which is a big advantage. Then there are enough tourist and shopping hubs in the vicinity of our hotel, which are helping to fuel our growth.

Please throw some light on the quality control measures at your F&B outlets along with the details of your centralized kitchen and supply operations?

Our centralized kitchen only distributes the production of the food as per the requisition done by the software system. Standard recipes and stock in hand are monitored and the production is executed accordingly. The advantage of this particular format is that there are no pilferages and wastage and you have the levers of control to manage the food cost.

Secondly, we adhere to various ISO22000 norms in terms of hygiene, sanitation, shelf life of the product and maintainance of the systems, all of which help to ensure quality control.

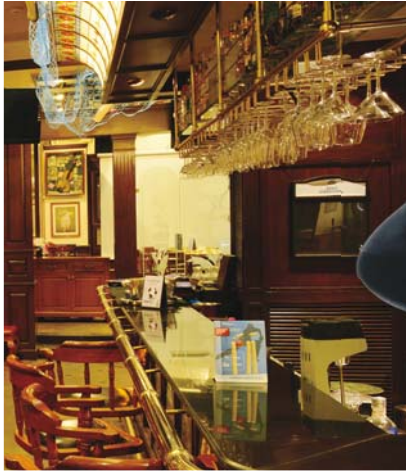
Who are your top suppliers for F&B and which are the product categories they cater to?

There are many suppliers for various product categories. Some of them are Virchand Khimji for provision supplies, Fortune Gourmet for imported ingredients, Tawakal Traders as meat supplier, K. Shroff as seafood supplier and also for farm products and pork, Adeshir for eggs, Vasant & Company for fruits, T.A. Enterprise for Chinese products, and Trikaya for exotic vegetables.

Which are the tools you are using to promote your F&B brands?

We make use of all the typical promotions that work nowadays. These include tactical, referral, website marketing, mobile marketing, cinema





activation, radio jingle, advertisement, social media and print media.

How and in what forms are you deploying technology to make your F&B business more efficient and customer friendly? How are you bringing technology to bear on your logistics, supply chain and innovation?

We are making use of technology in various forms: mobile app for our bookings and reservation system, e-feedback form, social media reviews, food bloggers' reviews are a few steps toward technology acceptance.

With the trend in vegetarian eating, healthy eating and health foods picking up, how are you bringing these trends to reflect in your menu offerings?

Our menu has the indicator of healthy and vegetarian food. Organic food and specially created healthy signature dishes are personally prepared by the Executive chef. The concept of "May I take your order" by the chef on the table is working very well for vegetarian and healthy food connoisseurs in our hotel. Our business mantra is to do things differently, and do them in a unique and modern way. ♦♦

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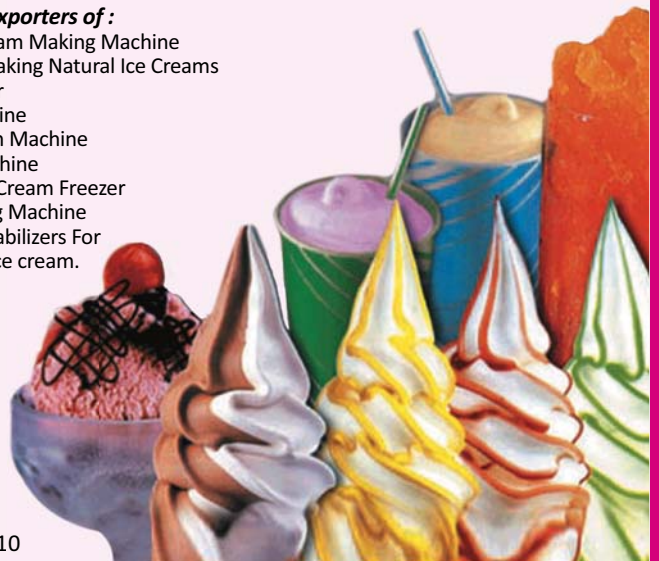
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Passion Domination

Kalpana and Prithviraj Chitnis, Co-founders of Basho, talk about how their dreams turned to reality through an unusual turn of fate when they bought a tea stall across their holiday home to get rid of the chaos it attracted.

by AS Iyer



FRESHNESS QUOTIENT

The main customers, Kalpana says, are the travellers who pass through Mulshi and halt for lunch or dinner. Their other set of customers are the ones who stay at the Basho resort located adjacently to the restaurant. Given the customer base of travellers, according to Kalpana, the menu needs to be mainly simple. She says, "While travelling, especially by road, people often prefer a simpler meal and not a fancy one. Although we do feature certain continental and Chinese cuisines, our focus is also on north Indian dishes."

The over-flowing bowls of surprisingly fresh food for such a remote location is rather refreshing. Kalpana says that they shop every alternate days for ingredients from Pune. The remote location and lack of markets close by is also one of the reasons why the Chitnis' decided against an elaborate menu.

A PLACE FOR PEACE

While Pune Basho's popularity is a major driver of customers to the lake-side restaurant and resort, it is also their marketing approach that makes up for the over-flowing customer base. Kalpana says, "We do not have a marketing plan in place. It is the popularity of our other properties that bring us customers and they are more than happy to come back because of their experience. Moreover, since Prithvi and I are also into yoga, we plan to recreate a space where people can come for a yoga and think of it as a meditation retreat."

She explains while hosting events like these, food is also an important aspect of the experience and that organic food would be a part of hosting the intimate gatherings.

PASSION OVER POSSESSION

According to the well-travelled couple, it is also their approach to the business which gives them an edge. They say they do not look at competition and rebrand or realign their strategies with the market trends. The proof for that lies in the New Year party the resort had to offer sans loud music! For the duo, it is passion to deliver and make the customers walk out happy that dominates their working style and pattern rather than the account books. "It is not about making money, but about satisfying our passion for providing great customer service. After all that is how we have continued over time to sustain our business as people are happy to return," Kalpana signs off. ♦♦

It is not about making money, but about satisfying our passion for providing great customer service.

Enter Basho and the first view of the restaurant is soothing – the seating arrangements almost at an arm's distance of the Mulshi Lake, with soft, cool breeze welcoming the diners. Surrounded by plants all over, with three different levels of seating; starting from the lowest close to the lake, the view is something no one can miss. The lighting and ambience brings the diners a step further to the close-to-nature. Set up with an aim to give customers a place to have a quite meal away from the chitter chatter of the city life in Pune, Basho is developed by husband-wife duo Kalpana and Prithvi Chitnis.

Kalpana, a paper technologist, and Prithvi, a trained chef, started the Mulshi Basho a couple of years ago. The owners of Pune's 15-year-old Basho and Sheesha Café, gave the duo hands on experience in setting up the Mulshi outlet when all they wanted was some peace in their Mulshi holiday home which was located right next to a tea stall. With an aim to make their holidays more peaceful, the duo decided to buy the stall to get rid of the clamorous crowds it invited. But as fate would have it, the couple turned around the place to set up a full-fledged, multi-cuisine restaurant – after all, the business was something they knew inside out. Soon, came in the owners of the nearby farms who offered their place to the Chitnis to expand their restaurant and that's how their dream to set up a resort away in the lap of nature turned into reality.



Kalpana Chitnis and Prithviraj Chitnis



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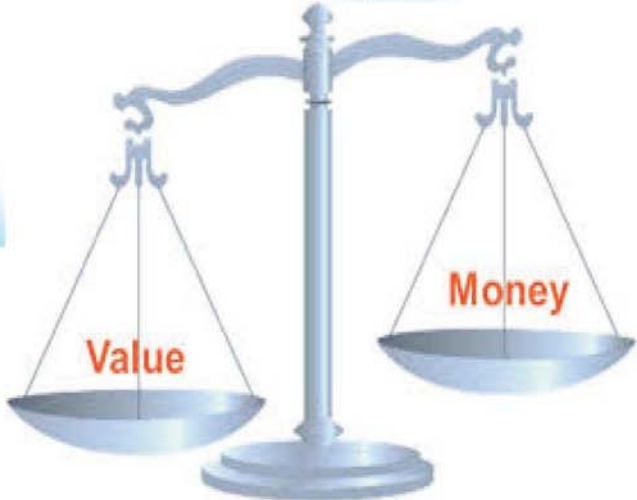
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“Our menu displays are managed from a central point to ensure singularity and cohesiveness of communication. Our customer loyalty program is completely integrated with our billing system and operates on cloud, thereby making it extremely customer friendly.”

Ram Wasan
Director, Vatika QSR Hospitality Pvt. Ltd.

“We intend to take Indian food to every ‘NUKKAD’ of the world”

Nukkadwala – a new Indian QSR chain by NCR-based real estate and hospitality major Vatika Group – aims to make India street food famous across the globe. FoodService India spoke to **Ram Wasan**, Director, Vatika QSR Hospitality Pvt. Ltd., about the concept and theme behind Nukkadwala and about his plans to take his brand to other places in India and abroad.

What is the concept and market positioning of Nukkadwala?

Our inspiration in setting up Nukkadwala last year has been the over five million street vendors across India who peddle tasty morsels of a variety of foods every day. Thanks to them, Indians can eat their way through the streets of the country. Indian cuisine is widely accepted as one of the most broad-ranging and interesting cuisines worldwide and our regional diversity is visible in the spread and strength of the regional cuisines. Tapping the same feeling of nostalgia, we strive to provide all our consumers a service experience that encompasses warmth, good service and unrivaled cuisine. Our brand promise encompasses offering our customers authentic flavours of hand-picked regionally-popular Indian food served hygienically.

What is the culinary portfolio that is offered at your restaurants and what is the price range?

Nukkadwala operates on the theme of creating nostalgic memories by exploring flavours that can be found only at specific places and regions of India. Our dishes will want to make you go back in time and to the roots of the food on offer. We recreate the dishes you ate as a child and our aim is to stir up your vivid memories associated with it as a reminder of how awesome childhood was.

In terms of the offerings at Nukkadwala, it serves authentic and handpicked regional food specialties and flavors from every part of India. These dishes ensure that the age-old original and authentic tastes are preserved, maintained and shared with our customers. For example, we have offerings like kutchi dabeli from Gujarat, bebinca from Goa, vada pav from Mumbai, etc.

The price range is affordable and very amenable for the masses. Samoso, for example, starts at just Rs. 22 and Chatar Pattar items like Marori's, Nan Khatai, etc., are available at just Rs. 17. The average price for two people dining at Nukkadwala is approximately Rs. 300.

Which are your best-selling products?

A few of our best selling products are kutchi dabeli, Bombay pav bhaji, tiffin meals, amchi vada pav, Meerut shikanji, and Tilla kulfi.

What have been your key innovations in food and beverage?

The success story of Nukkadwala is due to several years of research and efforts of our product development team. We have ensured that we bring the most authentic taste with original recipes from each region so that our guests are able to experience the true flavours when dining in Nukkadwala. Our menu takes the tastes of the street to a level you won't find anywhere else. That's the innovation in food and beverage that we always intend to bring.

Considering the peculiarities of the supply chain in India, have you introduced any specific innovations to make your back-end operations foolproof?

We have created a supply chain system that is suited to our current operations and can be easily upgraded as we increase the outlets. Nukkadwala brings the best of both the worlds by offering authentic Indian street food along with by state-of-the-art technology at kitchen as well as stores. This helps us in delivering the freshest ingredients to our customers.

With an unconventional name 'Nukkadwala', how have been able to align the interiors, decor and ambience of the outlets to vibe with its name?

The décor at Nukkadwala stores is done in a way to bring alive the nostalgia and culture of India. The interiors are chic with a casual vibe. We have focused on reliving childhood memories by adding memorabilia such as comics, marbles, etc. Even our menu, if you see, has things like phantom ciggis, Fatafat and all such things that we used to relish in the good old days.

You plan to double the number of your restaurants from the current 10 to 25. What is the roadmap?

We plan to extend our brand presence to Delhi-NCR followed by north India and Bengaluru. We will soon be taking Nukkadwala overseas by opening outlets in the Middle East, New York and London. Our expansion is carefully planned based on extensive research on markets as well as with the help of complete back-end support.

What is your location strategy?

We have models designed and operational in high street, commercial complexes and food court locations.

What have been your brand's key achievements so far and what do you attribute them to?

We are a very young brand and are happy that our customers have appreciated our food offerings, and the ambience and design of our outlets. Also, we have achieved the milestone of opening 10 outlets across Delhi-NCR. This has been possible due to our loyal customers who have showered immense love and showed true patronage towards Nukkadwala.

In your opinion, what is the scope for making value additions in the QSR format and going forward what do you think will be the new innovations to the QSR format in India?

We are in the fast casual segment and we pride ourselves on the authentic taste of our products. Going ahead, innovations that will mark this segment will be faster turnarounds, dynamic menu with monthly specials to pique the interests of the customer, interactive ordering systems to reduce ordering time and simple customer loyalty programs to help customers take frequent visit decisions.

In which ways are you are deploying technology to make your business more efficient and customer friendly?

We use real time billing systems and our inventory and supply chain is completely integrated with the same. Our menu displays are managed from a central point to ensure singularity and cohesiveness of communication. Our customer loyalty program is completely integrated with our billing system and operates on cloud, thereby making it extremely customer friendly.

In terms of your investment and expansion plans, what are your short-term and long-term goals for the Indian market?

We plan to continue with our current momentum in the future as well. Nukkadwala has national and international aspirations. Our expansion is carefully planned based on market demand and our ability to have complete back-end support. However, we will be expanding beyond India as per our network expansion plan. We soon intend to take Indian food to every nukkad of the world. ●●

NUKKADWALA AT A GLANCE

Format type:

QSR

Total number of outlets currently:

10

Pockets/ regions with the maximum concentration of outlets:

Gurgaon

Total retail area under operation:

12,000 sq. ft.

Total number of employees:

120

Average size of an outlet and seating capacity:

1,000 sq. ft. with 35 to 40 covers

Sales per square feet:

Confidential

Main offerings:

Regional street foods

Same store growth:

Outlets are still to complete one year of operation

Price point:

Rs. 300 for 2 diners



Going ahead, innovations that will mark this segment will be faster turnarounds, dynamic menu, interactive ordering systems, and simple customer loyalty programs.



“Our aim is to make **Burger Singh** the ‘**Subway**’ of burgers”

Kabir Jeet Singh, Founder and CEO, Burger Singh and Tipping Mr Pink Pvt. Ltd., speaks to FoodService India about his chain’s hectic expansion plans over the next three years and growing the brand equity in the fast casual dining space.



Tell us about your chain’s progress in all these years of operation. How many outlets have you been able to add in this period and how many more do you plan to add?

We opened our first outlet in November 2014 in Delhi and today we have expanded to nine outlets in Delhi-NCR. As of today, Burger Singh operates one night kitchen in Gurgaon apart from another experience store there (3,000 sq.ft. with a liquor licence).

Besides, we run seven smaller QSR models out of which five are located in Delhi and two in Gurgaon.

We are now at a stage where we have put in the hard work, done the experiments and know what is working for us. We have a national supply chain, depth of management and systems in place to make Burger Singh a national chain. We have

started franchising the brand. Burger is a highly franchisable product and no franchise industry is more mature than that of the fast food hamburger. Examples include Wendy’s, Johnny Rockets and the big daddy of them all, McDonald’s. In order to compete with these industry giants, we need to have a product differentiator, which we do in the desi burger. Also, we need to move quickly, otherwise someone else will capitalize on the niche that we have created.

We have now partnered with Franchisee India for three territories – Pune, Hyderabad, North India – and plan to open a total of 40 outlets in these areas in the next 24 months. The aim is to make Burger Singh the ‘Subway’ of burgers. The plan is to franchise aggressively with small 500 sq.ft. stores, which cost the franchisee under INR 30 lakh to open. These outlets will come up in high footfall locations and have an efficient delivery system.

We will continue to expand our footprint in NCR with a mix of our own and franchisee stores and expect to open 10 of these in the next 12 months.





Kabir Jeet Singh

Some the leading foreign QSR brands have been witnessing slowing same-store sales growth over the past few quarters?

That's not how I look at it. Most of the big boys have been showing y-o-y growth for many years and at some point a correction happening is not unusual. These are big companies and have been around the block for quite sometime. I am sure they will come back strong.

We are the new kids on the block and too young to see a decline. In fact, our revenue per outlet has increased by 37%. I am no economist but I feel that India's growth story is robust. In the short-to-medium term, India appears to be in a position to sustain the current growth momentum. As for the QSR sector, the three things that favour the industry are its demographic advantage, robust domestic consumption and cheap labour and these factors will not change in a quarter or two.

Is it right to say that the food business is not affected by the turns and tides of the economy?

Eating out is a luxury, it's not really a necessity. When the times are tough, any sensible person will spend his resources on the most pressing needs. So I think the QSR industry does get affected by economic downturns. I will go to the extent of saying that the impact on the food service business might be even larger than the average standards for the overall industry.

What do you think is the scope for making value additions to the QSR format and what will be the new innovations to this format in India?

We like to describe ourselves as a fast casual restaurant rather than a QSR. Fast Casual borrows from QSR and Casual Dining. Fast Casual features a more upscale and diverse menu selection in comparison to the QSR format. Unlike Casual Dining, Fast Casual has no table service and orders are placed and paid first and customers are directed to the assembly area where the food is ready for you to bring to your table. Some chains have a slight variant here – they will take your order, let you proceed to your table and a food runner will bring your meal to you. The ambiance is more upscale versus fast food with designs ranging from upscale elements and soft colors.

Burgers constitute only 2% of the QSR market but are growing at a much faster rate of 25%. So we are in a good spot. I still feel the pizza category will maintain its position and burgers will take time to catch up.



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About 42% of our sales comes from home delivery. This is a big number as the industry standard for burger home delivery ranges from 6-10%. Therefore, we can open smaller stores and compete in this environment.

I feel that going forward, there will be two new innovative trends visible in the Fast Casual segment. A lot more innovation will happen to Indianize the menu. And a lot more independent fast casual restaurants and food trucks will burst on the scene. Casual dining chains will “downscale” to grab this set of consumers and quick service chains will “upscale” for the same reason.

How do you assess the market potential for the burger category in India. How do you see it performing versus the Pizza category and which new trends and influences will shape the growth of this category going ahead?

The organized F&B industry is expected to reach over INR 150,000 crore (\$25 bn) by 2018 from INR 75,000 crore (\$12.5 bn) in 2013 at a CAGR of 16%. Burgers constitute only 2% of the QSR market but are growing at a much faster rate of 25%. So we are in a good spot. I still feel the pizza category will maintain its position and burgers will take time to catch up. I feel a lot of smaller players like us will enter the market and create home-grown competition in the burger category. I think what will shape the growth of this market and spur the funding landscape. In the recent path, a lot of investors have burnt their fingers in the food and food tech space and therefore the funding sentiment for this sector is not the best at the moment.

What has been the market response to your especially crafted vegetarian menu for Indian consumers. Are you looking to expand its scope further by bringing in newer ingredients?

The response has been phenomenal and this has given us the strength to bring in a new category of vegetarian burgers in the sub-100 rupees range. This range will be launched in the first week of May 2017. The purpose of this range is to help us get into smaller cities and attract the value seeking consumer.

International burger chains operating in India usually have third party vendors from whom they source their ingredients. How do you ensure that the vendors meet the quality parameters and benchmarks?

We are not looking to reinvent the wheel. The big boys have set up some exceptionally robust systems and processes throughout the industry. We have adopted a lot of what these first world companies have brought in and it is working well for us. The industry has a lot of people for sourcing the products from. However, there are only a handful that can ensure and maintain consistent quality. We are working with these players. These quality third party vendors are expensive and it is a strain on a small company like ours; but I sleep well at night knowing that I have not compromised on the quality for saving a few coins.

Considering the peculiarities of the supply chain in India, have you introduced any specific innovations to make your back-end operations foolproof?

I think the cold supplychain in India has drastically improved over the last few years. So it is foolproof at a certain scale. We are yet to reach that level of scale but are fairly close to it. The innovation that we have brought to this aspect is predominantly our internal systems of forecasting demand and ensuring minimum wastage.

What has been the response to your home delivery service? How much of online sales are you doing currently and how do you see this segment growing for you?

About 42% of our sales comes from home delivery. This is a big number as the industry standard for burger home delivery ranges from 6-10%. Therefore, we can open smaller stores and compete in this environment. And since demonetization, almost all of this delivery business comes to us through online channels and is almost always prepaid. I don't see this number changing drastically as a segment of our sales. But this is also the most challenging aspect of our business, especially the last mile logistics.

You spoke of expanding the chain through the self-owned and the franchise route. Are your investment and expansion plans limited to the Indian market for now?

Our plans are not limited to just the Indian market. Burgers are a scalable product and accepted around the world. Indian cuisine is popular around the world and so it makes sense for us to look at the world and not just India. You will soon see a Burger Singh signage in an International capital.

For the Indian market, we will be opening months is to open 40 franchisee in cities of Pune, Hyderabad and north India over the next 36 months. Besides, we are looking to open 40 company-owned stores in NCR, Bangalore and Mumbai. We are in the process of getting ourselves ready to hit the market to raise the capital for this expansion. ●●



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Tushar Malkani, Executive Chef and General Manager, Kaitlyn's Beer Garden, Mumbai, speaks to FoodService India about his learnings in the profession and his thoughts on the evolving nature of the F&B industry and the challenges it poses for chefs.

“Regional cuisine in India is like an ocean whose depth is yet to be explored”

Take us through your culinary journey so far and the major milestones accomplished along the way?

After graduating from Culinary Academy of India, Hyderabad, I began my career with The Leela Group of Hotels in Mumbai. Then I moved on ITC, The Grand Maratha, Mumbai, and to The Oberoi, Mumbai, thereafter. Later, I went into teaching and started on a new chapter with ITM, Kharghar, as an assistant lecturer where I taught first year students and offering them basic training in the kitchen. Moving ahead in the education field, I joined Don Bosco College of Hotel Management in Kurla as a lecturer for advance kitchen training. Along the way, I received a good offer with a multinational education company in Chennai, Everonn Education, as Centre Head for the south zone where I taught short-term hospitality courses affiliated to IGNOU university.

Upon returning to Mumbai, I joined Café Coffee Day as a trainer. The job entailed training the new staff in different aspects of coffee chain operations, evaluating staffing opportunities and a lot more. At this point, I opted for a career break before joining Khar Gymkhana as Head of F&B and executive chef for five of their outlets. I also became an official consultant to Supreme Hospitality heading 10 of their clubs across Mumbai.

For a year now, I'm Executive Chef and General Manager for Kaitlyn's Hospitality (Kaitlyn's Beer Garden). I also run my own consultancy as well. This year has been generous to me. I have received the WorldMasterChef No. 0004 from India awarded by the World MasterChef Society U.K.. I have also been made a senior member of The Emirates Culinary Guild (ECG), Syrian Culinary Guild, jury member of Korean Food Culture Challenge Cup 2017, senior member of Israel Masterchef Academy, Honorary Member of Mongolian MasterChef Association, member of The Euro-Toques Romania, member of The ACEEA-Romania and a lifetime member of The Western India Culinary Association, Indian Culinary Forum.

How would you articulate the role of a modern-day chef?

A modern-day chef must be able to think out of the box. His role is not just in the kitchen but also extends to his ability to sell his product. He should stay updated, be creative and outgoing and also be a team leader. Today, a chef can't work alone by himself; he has to be a trainer and a role model for his team to get the product as per his expectations.

Chefs today are expected to be tech savvy with a good knowledge of all IT gadgets and social media in order to remain updated. I used to buy very expensive cookbooks when I entered the industry, now all the info is available at your fingertips. Technology has made it easy.



How do you envisage the evolving role of chefs in a changing food scenario?

Chefs are at the epicentre of F&B operations. More and more restaurants in India are now exposing and cashing on their chef's popularity. Chefs are walking out of the closets now. At Kaitlyns, we have chefs who interact with guests and offer them a customised order as per their specifications. The practice of running a restaurant by leveraging on the chef's reputation was until now popular outside India but is now gaining ground in the country as well. People in India now travel to eat at their favourite chef's restaurant. Guests now like to interact directly with the chefs while placing their orders.

What are the challenges of working as a top chef and how do you keep ahead of the curve?

Chefs are now playing with the flavours, textures, tastes and presentation. They are also good salesmen. They know the market trends and they are very competitive, which is healthy. It gives them food for thought to innovate. I was lucky enough to have worked with a lot of great chefs in the industry and learnt a lot from them. I also get to go around the world and see the local ingredients and cooking techniques in various parts of the world. Chefs should now be open to travelling far and wide and be able to reinvent themselves.

Tell us about the cuisines that you love most and what do you find fascinating about them?

I specialize in European cuisine, especially Mediterranean, and use lots of alcohol with my fusion cooking. I have also tried to learn other global cuisines and expand my horizons. That said, having been born in India, Indian flavours run in my blood. The number of people appreciating the finer nuances of cuisines is growing fast. People are



Chefs are now playing with the flavours, textures, tastes and presentation. They are also good salesmen. They know the market trends and they are very competitive, which is healthy. It gives them food for thought to innovate.

well-travelled these days and have a great amount of exposure to the food; thus their expectations are also wide and varied and meeting these demands is a very fulfilling pursuit for chefs.

What is the one thing that is going to change the way food will be promoted in future?

Updated cooking techniques, innovative cooking, gadgets and technology will increasingly come to define the way food is promoted in the future.





Guests have become very demanding these days as they are better exposed to the trends around the world. They know and they compare. And guests will only come back only if you offer a wholesome experience with the best food, service and ambience.



How do you see the potential of Indian regional cuisines and which ones do you think have a great future?

Regional cuisine in India is like an ocean whose depth is yet to be explored. Every nook and corner of India has something to offer that is so interesting that you just wonder why did I not taste or see this yet? Take, for example, Tellicherry pepper from Niligiri mountains in south India. I bought it from a grocery store in Matunga, Mumbai, while many in India do not know about it outside that region. So are many ingredients like Kasundi mustard, Gaundoraj lime...the list is endless.

Can you offer us examples of some innovative F&B ideas that you have implemented in the past year and/or have plans to implement?

I have experimented a lot in changing the presentation of food. One eats with the eyes before he eats the food. I have also been using a lot of micro-greens not only with European food but also with Oriental and Indian food. Many micro-shoots are being home-grown at our farms. Why should Indian food be garnished with coriander only? The options are endless. I also emphasize on healthy eating. I have brought our cooking oil consumption to less than 50% by cutting down on the oils in all our recipes. No one appreciates oil running around the main food on the plate. We have come up with two new brands under the same hospitality banner doing exclusively health food like red lintel curry with brown rice, char-grilled chicken with crown rice and tomato-based gravy and salad in a whole meal box, to cite a few examples. Many people lacked the awareness of healthy cooking earlier but today it has become a trend as strong as the vegan diet has.

What are your observations about the evolution and developments in fine dining, smart/ casual dining and QSRs in India?

Those who look for classier food and service along with quality time will continue to go to the fine dines. Since India is all about outing with families, casual dining too has a great potential where the families join, wine and dine and have a good time.

QSRs will grow at a very fast pace as it is a symbol of the change in our society. The youth want to grab something quickly and move out fast, so they do not require much service. QSRs are also pocket-friendly options for them. And chefs will continue to develop such recipes that are suitable for serving in QSRs.

What can one expect from the food scene in the country going ahead?

The F&B market is growing at a very good clip. Food serving outlets are growing and coming up fast everywhere. Restaurant hubs are mushrooming everywhere. But the fittest will survive. Guests have become very demanding these days as they are better exposed to the trends around the world. They know and they compare. And guests will only come back only if you offer a wholesome experience with the best food, service and ambience. One needs to stand out and think out of the box and keep changing concepts, seasonal menu and keep doing little bits of twists in the serving pattern of crockery. All of these are necessary for retention of the guest and to ensure that they have something new every time they visit.

What have been your major learnings in this profession that you would like to pass down to aspiring chefs of the future?

This is a very challenging profession which demands a lot of "you" in every sense. If you chose to be a chef then you are expected to be passionate about it. If that zeal and fire is missing then you are in the wrong profession. But if you enjoy seeing food and flavours in everything around you, welcome to the world of culinary art! ●●

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When it comes to gourmet restaurants and posh dining, the hospitality industry in the UAE has gained quite a reputation for hosting some of the world's best known premium brands. In the past decade, this offer has been expanded by a growing number of high-profile gourmet grocery concepts, both franchised or independently run. Largely concentrated in Dubai, the gourmet food scene in the remaining emirates was lagging behind until the opening of the first Jones the Grocer outlet in Abu Dhabi in 2009. Today, the Australian-born food emporium has 13 outlets in operation in the Gulf region and six more worldwide. A portrait by Bettina Quabius.



GOURMET FOOD for Everyday Living

In the Middle East, Jones the Grocer was established in 2009 by Yunib Siddiqui, CEO of JTG Holdings, a passionate lover of food who started as a franchisee of the global brand and, after opening nine stores in the region, became a sub-franchisor for the Middle East. The brand which had been operating as a high-end food emporium since 1996 in Sydney, Australia, today has 19 stores in Australia (1), Bahrain (1), Qatar (2), New Zealand (3), Singapore (1), Thailand (1) and the UAE (10) with four more in the pipeline. The beginning of 2016 saw Siddiqui become the majority shareholder of the global brand and owner of all intellectual property for Jones the Grocer. As part of this acquisition, L Catterton, a fund partly owned by LVMH, correspondingly acquired a minority stake in the Middle East entity.

Pioneers on the foodie scene

The opening of the first store in the Middle East marked the beginning of a new era in the region's foodie scene. "We are a gourmet grocery, with a walk-in cheese room, an artisan bakery, patisserie and café," Siddiqui outlines the concept. On a regular basis, Jones the Grocer runs cooking classes, barista classes and other educational activities in their stores. Celebrity chef events and promotions throughout the year feature the grocery offer and special foodie elements of the stores, such as cheese, truffles or other seasonal products. The brand's slogan 'gourmet food for everyday living' underscores its focus.



I believe the reason for the success is our ability to create and execute exceptional content. What we do stands out from the crowd.

Yunib Siddiqui
CEO of JTG Holdings



Back in 2009, when Jones the Grocer opened its first store in the Al Mamoura Building in Abu Dhabi, it was the first of its kind in the city. The decision not to start the business in Dubai – which for many would have been the obvious choice – was owed to the circumstances at the time: “I had been looking for locations and compiling a business plan during 2008,” Siddiqui explains and remembers: “During this time the market in Dubai was at its peak. Commercial rentals did not make any sense within the context of my business model. After looking at the market carefully, I made a decision to explore the Abu Dhabi market where rents were lagging behind Dubai.” In addition, the decision not to choose a mall location but instead premises off the beaten track in a commercial development set the strategy for destination driven locations. Siddiqui says: “This is actually somewhat of a differentiator for us because we are typically situated in residential or business areas, rather than areas with high pedestrian or tourist traffic. It helps us create a neighborhood feeling and we have many regular customers at our outlets due to the convenience and proximity to their homes or work.”

The location of the first store turned out to be just perfect, with employees from the many government offices and international companies in the building dropping by to grab a quick breakfast, have lunch or meet after work, making a good mix of expats and urban Emiratis. In fact, the Crown Prince of the UAE is known to be a frequent guest,

bringing along VIPs from politics and business. In 2011, the company launched a second store in Abu Dhabi, soon to be followed by the long expected opening in Dubai in the same year, with 600 sq m the biggest outlet so far. Today, there are ten stores in the UAE alone, five of them in Abu Dhabi, three in Dubai and two in the emirate of Sharjah.

However, the start for the new enterprise was not without obstacles, as entrepreneur Siddiqui remembers: “The main challenge was navigating local authority regulations and staffing. When we first started the business I conducted every single interview. I probably interviewed most of the first 80 employees. Many of them still work for us. It’s always a challenge to get the right person. When we do, it’s a challenge to retain them because we are seen as a recruitment ground by other F&B operators which can be viewed as a testament to our success.” The company promotes talent internally so employees can see they have a future ahead of them. Today, nearly all senior management positions have been filled through internal growth.

Buzzing hotspot

Within a short time, Jones the Grocer became a buzzing foodie hotspot and destination café. The customer base at Jones the Grocer outlets is as diverse as the population within the region; the typical age group is between 25 and 49. Guests are feeling attracted by the contemporary, friendly design with elements of warehouse architecture, the open plan kitchens and open preparation areas for the patisserie and the live bakery and the long communal tables that create a sense of community and provide a perfect place to gather with friends and colleagues. Other unique features such as a coffee and tea tasting area where coffee is filtered through a Bunsen burner and a special ‘stove’ that heats water to the optimum temperature for each type of tea leaf, the large walk-in cheese room with an offer of up to 180 different types of cheeses and, on a seasonal basis, a huge truffle selection add to the overall appeal, apart from the culinary offer.



JONES THE GROCER (JTG HOLDING)

Headquarters:
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Foundation:
1996 in Sydney, Australia

Entry in the MENA region:
2009

No. of stores by country:
Australia (1), Bahrain (1), Qatar (2), New Zealand (3), Singapore (1), Thailand (1), UAE (10)

No. of franchised stores:
8

Turnover 2015:
US \$25 m

Average check:
€23.50

Sales breakdown:
60% foodservice, 40% retail

Menu bestseller:
Wagyu Beef Burger

www.jonesthegrocer.com



GROCERY CAFÉS

At Jones the Grocer guests are feeling attracted by the contemporary design, the open plan kitchens and open preparation areas for the patisserie and the live bakers, as well as the long communal tables that create a sense of community.



Celebrating food

Jones, as it is called by its fan community, offers a modern international 'Everyday Menu' with an Australian influence focusing on natural ingredients produced by specialist, artisan suppliers. The café is well known for its breakfasts, consequently the bestselling category for the brand. Served until noon on weekdays and until 4 pm on weekends, the offer includes Traditional English breakfast (AED59/€14.50), several poached egg variations (AED31-46/€7.50-11), Eggs Benedict (AED44/€11) and omelettes (AED49/€12) as well as a selection of cereals, fruits and breads (AED28-41/€7-10). Prices for fresh or toasted sandwiches, particularly popular for take away and made from Jones baked bread, range between AED36 and 43 (€9-10.50). Whereas the menu offerings are pretty much the same in all stores throughout the region, prices vary slightly by location, mostly due to local taxes.

The lunch and dinner menu, kicking off at 11.30 am daily, has recently been revamped with many wheat free, paleo and vegetarian options and features a fine selection of soups and salads such as Roast pumpkin & feta salad and classic Jones Caesar Salad (both AED49/€12) or Marinated tuna jasmine tea smoked tofu and wakame salad

(AED64/€15.50) as well as a range of seafood and meat dishes (AED75/€18) that are served on boards and meant to be shared. Guests can also choose from around twelve main dishes, many of which enjoy cult status such as the Jones Wagyu Burger (AED79/€19), the Chargrilled Harissa Chicken (AED61/€15) and the Battered Fish & Chips (AED66/€16). The tempting offer of desserts (all gluten-free) includes a large selection of freshly baked cakes and pastries (AED14-28/€3.50-7). Popular drinks are Jones natural cordials, fresh juices and lemonades such as Lavender & coconut water lemonade as well as fresh smoothies and indulgent milkshakes like the Eton mess and Chocolate brownie.

Retail offer

Retail is another cornerstone of the company's business, making up 40% of the revenue. Besides a strong private label component, the store offers a large range of third party premium brands. Siddiqui says: "Nearly everything we stock is made by small artisan producers and it is all about how good it tastes. Exclusivity is also a key factor in deciding whether to stock a product or not. We like to integrate our retail with the menu. So, if you like our three cheese toastie on our Everyday Menu, you can buy pretty much all the ingredients in store." A group executive chef who creates all special and core menu recipes liaises with suppliers or Jones the Grocer's internal supply chain for special retail products when those are featured on the menu. Beyond groceries, customers can also browse a carefully selected range of homewares and cookbooks.

Currently, the company is in the process of updating their branding and in-store design to keep up with times: "Both aspects are key to attracting the right type of consumers and engaging with them while they are in our stores," Siddiqui says. However cost and time effective, the gourmet concept relies heavily on social media (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Trip Advisor) to inform about promotions and offerings.

Growth is mainly franchise based and will depend on interest, Siddiqui comments his plans for the future. One of the major projects in the pipeline is a store opening at the new Midfield Terminal in Abu Dhabi which is scheduled for end 2017. "After an outlet at Dubai International Airport which is due to open soon, this will be our second location within an airport," he says, "and we have had to explore a number of different menu items and retail offerings to suit travelers that will be in transit or on the go. It is also a great opportunity for us to expose our brand to people who may be just passing through the Emirates as both Dubai and Abu Dhabi airports continue to grow as international hubs."

And exactly this, local and international growth is what one can expect from Jones the Grocer as well. ●●





TIN CANS- A portable warehouse

Tin cans offer maximum shelf life compared to any other pack, whether it is for dry products or liquid products like fruit juices, beverages, etc.

by Saket Bhatia

the contents can be stored inside the cans without any requirements of refrigeration/ temperature control.

Tin cans offer all of the above along with certain other distinct advantages. It is 100% recyclable, i.e., all disposed metal cans are eventually melted and converted into fresh cans once again. What is even more striking is that the metal retains its original properties despite being recycled an infinite number of times. They also command the highest recycling rates in most of the developed economies. In India, due to their excellent value, rag pickers salvage the metal scrap, and there is a natural preference for tin cans over other metals built into the recycling system.

In the last few decades, upgradation in the technology of can making has led to a reduction of almost 50% in the weight of the can. Moreover, this attribute has been improving continuously as the industry is aggressively working on the thickness reduction and yield improvement.

It is the need of the hour to create awareness about the unique advantages of tin cans as being environment friendly and a leader in the packaging industry. We, at Hindustan Tin Works Ltd, have initiated a global campaign to reposition cans by organising a "Canvironment Week", which saw a lot of excitement from the user industry. We strongly feel that this initiative spread the right message across the masses. FMCG companies can look at leveraging the packaging choice as another platform to Go Green, and conserve the natural resources of the earth. With the recent thrust by the government on reducing waste/ Swacch Bharat/ recyclability of packaging material and aligning itself with the developed world, we estimate that tin packaging shall be positioned as a preferable packing option.

The future of the tin packaging industry looks promising although there are many challenges. With the increasing awareness on hygiene and safety of the product, the demand for packaging is increasing in double digits, particularly as we see a shift in trends from loose products to packed products. Water, milk, juice are classic examples of the same and the trends are very clear about what the consumer really wants! ••



Packaging is the heart and soul of any product and it is the only tool of communication that leads a consumer to an impulse purchase. It is also known as the nine-second window and acts as a silent salesman for the brand and the product. Any mode of packaging should offer appropriate barrier properties, shelf life and printability to create brand recognition; it should be temper proof, leakage proof and ensure the right nutritional/ aesthetic values of the product being packed inside the package.

More than 50% of the food is wasted between the farm and the plate. The government is providing huge incentives to set up cold chains and better distribution systems to preserve food. Metal packaging/ canning, a solution existing for the last two centuries, is still unmatched as it preserves all nutrients and almost all vitamins. With sophisticated equipment and technology, metal packaging helps keep the quality of the processed food intact and gives a shelf life of 24 months for the product without it being refrigerated.

Studies prove that more vitamins get retained in canned food compared to food kept and stored in the fridge. India being an energy deficient country, preserving food by metal packaging/ canning is an ideal option because this method uses 70% less energy compared to cold chain systems. Cans can also be stored in ambient temperature and withstand all kind of rough distribution conditions. That is why we say that a tin can is like a portable warehouse.

Tin cans offer maximum shelf life compared to any other pack, whether it is for dry products or liquid products like fruit juices, beverages, etc. It not only offers the highest barrier to the ingress of oxygen, moisture, bacteria, sunlight and rodents but is also very shelf stable. By shelf stable, we mean that once properly processed and packed,

In the last few decades, upgradation in the technology of can making has led to a reduction of almost 50% in the weight of the can. Moreover, this attribute has been improving continuously as the industry is aggressively working on the thickness reduction and yield improvement.



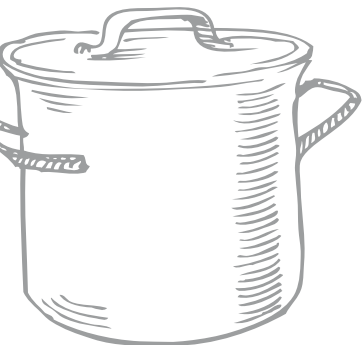
The writer is Senior Vice President (Marketing) at Hindustan Tin Works Ltd.

Ruling the roost in kitchen appliances



As quality, productivity and efficiency become buzzwords in the kitchen equipment industry, brands and manufacturers are competing to offer top-of-the-line commercial kitchen appliances to customers – hotels & restaurants, quick serving restaurants, industrial & educational canteens, hospital canteens, food wagons & kiosks, and caterers.

by Sanjay Kumar



The growth in the number of food outlets, expansion of the catering segment and changing culinary preferences are encouraging commercial kitchen equipment manufacturers to launch newer and more innovative products.

Buoyed by the surge in demand and intensifying competition for smarter kitchen appliances, equipment manufacturers are bringing in more cutting edge innovations to their wares. According to industry experts, the Indian food service market is ready for superior technology products that can reduce energy use, improve food quality and allow more open kitchen formats.

Taking the cue, MKN (Maschinenfabrik Kurt Neubauer GmbH & Co. KG), a German specialist with 70 years of special expertise in the development, manufacture and sales of premium professional thermal cooking technology, has introduced cutting range products in India and across the world that have proved a hit with top chefs everywhere. "MKN is one of the industry's global players and our products are being used by marquee clients around the world – Sydney Opera House, Burj Khalifa, British Palace of Westminster, London Heathrow Airport, and many cruise ships use our products in their kitchen," says **Mohua Das** who handles MKN's International sales in India as its Business Development Manager for South Asia.

Commercial kitchens today are defined by the level of their adoption for energy-efficient,

environment-friendly and technology savvy equipment. As a result, commercial kitchens in recent years have witnessed remarkable improvements in refrigeration, heating, storage and food preparation. "We manufacture a range of diversified products – Preparation Machineries, Cooking Equipment, Working & Utility Tables, Fast Food Equipment, Exhaust & Fresh Air Systems, Deck Ovens, Bakery Equipment, Catering Equipment, Trolleys, Bain Marie, Dining Tables, Cold Equipment, Display & Counters Equipment, Wash Area Equipment, Dish Washers, L.P.G Gas Pipe Line Installation & Burner & Spares, among other things. Apart from manufacturing these products, our services and solutions include kitchen planning/ layout, installation of equipment and exhaust & fresh air system, and LPG system designing and LPG pipeline installation,"

says Tejas Panchal, Director, Janshakti Industries, which has been in the business for 30 years now and is a leading commercial kitchen equipment manufacturer & solution provider company with numerous turnkey projects to its credit in Gujarat and other neighbouring states.

Like MKN and Janshakti, there are various other brands, both international and local, offering top-of-the-line commercial kitchen appliances and solutions. Kolkata-based Simi Star is a leading distributor of 46 major international and domestic brands in East India. The offerings of these kitchen equipment companies are wide and





varied and come with a growing selection of prices and options, making it fairly convenient to choose efficient equipment throughout the cooking line. "We supply to restaurants, hotels, cinema halls, hospitals, cafeterias and ice cream parlours. Our clients include foodservice players like Barbeque Nation, Häagen-Dazs, KFC, Kwaliti Walls, Inox, Cafe Coffee Day, Grid and many others," says **Inder Manot**, owner, Simi Star. With food & beverage outlets and chefs looking for equipment that bring functionality, power and the ease to everyday life in kitchens, the demand for advanced and intelligent kitchen machinery has touched off in a big way.

While hotel majors such as ITC, Oberoi, Indian Hotels Company and other leading chains understand the efficiencies that technologically-advanced equipment can bring to the overall food service business, even smaller players have now cottoned on to the multifarious benefits that these equipment bring to them. Not only do they fuel the culinary passion and creativity of chefs, their flawless performance and cutting edge design is a big asset in running kitchen operations. Renowned Indian chef **Hemant Oberoi**, who served a distinguished 41-year-long stint with the Taj Group, is all praise for MKN's line of kitchen equipment. "MKN is a brand I have used for over two decades. The quality of the products and their efficiency is unparalleled and amazing. The after-sales service is superb and I have always been happy with the products and will continue to patronize the brand," he says.

Not only are kitchen equipment totally technology driven today, they also play a vital role in myriad kitchen operations. Many manufacturers have top chefs on their panels to advise them on product development and for customizing solutions as per the requirements of a particular market. MKN has a great team of international chefs traveling around the whole



word to support its dealers and assist customers with their special needs and requirements. "Of course, we have engineers in our R&D team but part of it also comprises chefs who know what is going on in professional kitchens around the world," reveals Das of MKN. "In this modern era, people are becoming more aware and conscious about energy-efficient and environment-friendly appliances and solutions. Energy-efficient products with innovative technology will call the shots going ahead. As a manufacturer, we have a separate design and R&D department to design such products and deploy the latest in technology," says Panchal of Janshakti Industries.

According to experts, the defining feature of a smart kitchen equipment is that it should not only offer a smarter way of cooking but also provide an effective means to save on energy and time consumed for preparing a dish and wastage of resources such as water. One of MKN's best-selling products is the innovative FlexiChef, which is a multifunctional cooking appliance that optimizes kitchen processes with many customer benefits, particularly with regard to time and cost management. The multi-functionality of the FlexiChef means that the user can either cook or fry or pressure cook or deep fry in a single appliance, and the equipment demands only a small space requirement.



The defining feature of a smart kitchen equipment is that it should not only offer a smarter way of cooking but also provide an effective means to save on energy and time consumed for preparing a dish and wastage of resources such as water.



Mohua Das

FlexiCombi and FlexiChef are major growth drivers for MKN

Mohua Das, who handles MKN's International Sales in India, as its Business Development Manager for South Asia, on the company's new product range and of setting new standards in the commercial kitchen industry.

The multi functionality of the FlexiChef means that the user can either cook or fry or pressure cook or deep fry in a single appliance, and the equipment demands only a small space requirement. One big advantage of the FlexiChef is SpaceClean, the first automatic cleaning system for pans.

Tell us about your company's operations.

MKN is a German specialist engaged in the development, manufacture and worldwide sales of premium professional thermal cooking technology. Our operations are geared toward user-friendly optimization of kitchen work-flows and in recent years we have made several exportable equipment innovations that have resulted in a strong level of internationalization. With around 500 employees and worldwide business, MKN is now one of the industry's global players.

What is the line of kitchen equipment?

Our product range includes:

Küchenmeister: The MKN KüchenMeister fulfills chefs' dreams. The cooking islands are custom-made to the special wishes and requirements of customers. Each block is unique and meets the highest demands of design and functionality.

Modular cooking technology: The MKN Optima series appliances are recognized for top performance and reliability and are ideal for diverse areas of application.

Combi steamers: Since 2003, MKN has had its own combi steamer product line. Currently, the second generation of this product line is being sold successfully all around the world. Our products like FlexiCombi and SpaceCombi are setting new, innovative standards nowadays.

FlexiChef: In 2012, MKN introduced a completely new class of equipment, namely, FlexiChef, a multifunctional cooking appliance that optimizes processes in professional kitchens in terms of time and cost management.

Who are the end-users of your equipment?

Customers from all over the world work with our equipment. Well-known examples of top clients using our products are the Sydney Opera House, the Burj Khalifa, which boasts of the highest restaurant in the world, the British Palace of Westminster, London Heathrow Airport, and many cruise ships use our products in their kitchen.

Which is your best-selling product and what functional advantages does it have?

One of our best selling products is the innovative FlexiChef, which is a multifunctional cooking appliance that optimizes kitchen processes with many customer benefits, particularly with regard to time and cost management. One big advantage of the FlexiChef is SpaceClean, the first automatic cleaning system for pans.

What are the incentives that you offer to your dealers and distributors?

MKN believes in a healthy, long-term relationship with our partners. Hence, we have identified a few dedicated dealers in each region. Those dealers are given preferential prices, which are not shared with any other non-authorized partners. This gives leverage to our authorized partners to market our products and earn more. We also organize travel events to our factory in Germany, which combines training, engagement, and recreation for the dealers who have performed well.

What are you doing to boost R&D?

MKN has a great team of R&D working mainly in Germany. It is their daily business to improve our products with regard to the customer benefits. Of course, we have engineers in that team but part of it also comprises chefs who know what is going on in professional kitchens around the world.

How do you see the market for your products?

Considering the rapidly growing restaurant and hotel industry and development in urban infrastructure, we are very confident of market growth. Technologically advanced equipment such as the MKN combi oven and FlexiChef multifunctional pan have fostered the demand and continue to drive our sales. The introduction of FlexiCombi two years ago with its additional features and benefits will be a major factor contributing to the growth of MKN in the market.



We will grow by 100-200% every year and open more showrooms in East India

Inder Manot, Owner, Simi Star, a leading distributor in East India for 46 major international and national kitchen equipment brands, speaks about his company's plans for acquiring a bigger market footprint.



Inder Manot

How long have you been in this business?

Our brand is called Simi Star and we have been working in the kitchen equipment sector for the past 15 years. We are a distributor of 46 major international and domestic brands in East India. We supply to restaurants, hotels, cinema halls, hospitals, cafeterias and ice-cream parlours, effectively following our motto: 'We follow wherever there is food'.

Who are your major clients?

Our major clients are Barbeque Nation, Häagen-Dazs, KFC, Kwaliti Walls, Inox, Cafe Coffee Day, Grid and many others. Kwaliti Walls is one of the brands that we cater to on a pan-India basis.

Which are the brands you distribute?

We are distributors of numerous international and domestic brands such as Zumex, Astoria, Vitamix, KitchenAid, Frymaster and many others. We are the sole distributors of Electrolux in East India.

What awareness and promotional activities do you undertake for widening your customer base?

We have not undertaken much marketing activity to promote our company so far. Our products, though, are much in demand and so we opened our showroom in Park Street, Kolkata. We hope to

open a few such showrooms in East India in cities like Siliguri, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar and Guwhati. We have a dedicated WhatsApp group of all the major players in the F&B sector and much of our promotional activities is done there. For our international and domestic customers, we have an online portal to facilitate and make purchases.

What are the challenges in the way of deeper penetration of your products?

The challenge is to educate the customer against fake products and misleading selling. It is important to create awareness on the issue of quality and the value proposition of branded equipment because the quality of food gets compromised with inferior quality equipment. Due to the asymmetric information on the value and nature of material, lots of poor performing equipment get sold at distorted prices. While most other domestic players in this sector deal in MS (Mild Steel), we deal completely in SS (Stainless Steel) 304-food grade, which is rust-proof.

What are your plans for the future?

We will continue to grow by 100-200% every year. We plan to expand our market presence by opening more showrooms in East India and focusing more on the domestic market.

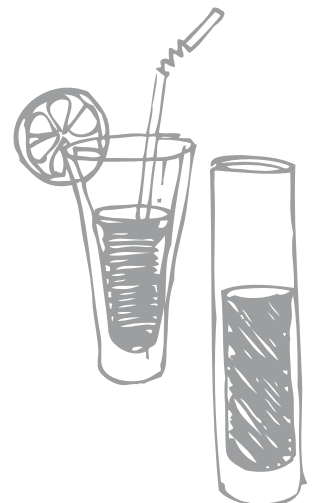


Improvements in design and technology in food service equipment are also bringing about dramatic reductions in energy consumption, resulting in carbon-footprint reductions and significant cost savings. By improving their energy efficiency through investments in cleaner and superior technology equipment, kitchens can help bring down the operating costs, achieve faster payback and gain from significant ongoing energy and water saving opportunities over the product's life cycle.

Such considerations are prompting equipment manufacturers to put their engineering prowess into finding more efficient ways to maintain food quality, conserve energy and reduce cost. In the refrigeration space, insulated drawer ensures 'low velocity cooling', which helps prolong the shelf life of food by preventing dehydration. This design innovation provides unmatched temperature stability and exceptional humidity control. Even during frequent or prolonged drawer openings,

the attack from high temperature ambient air is minimal, providing a cool and benign micro-climate for the storage of food. Some patented designs claim to be reducing energy consumption by 40 per cent on an average, when compared to conventionally equipment, with savings expected to score as high as 66 per cent on certain conditions. With energy savings becoming a big trump card, reduced power consumption is looked at seriously when assessing new-age kitchen equipment.

While important considerations like the size and scale of a venture, the clientele, nature of the menu and several other parameters are important factors in choosing the right commercial kitchen appliances, the need to meet high energy standards has also become an important aspect. It is estimated that commercial kitchens consume approximately twice as much energy as other commercial facilities. The kind of kitchen appliances in use is therefore all the more important from the energy efficiency view





Tejas Panchal

Energy-efficient products will call the shots

Tejas Panchal, Director, Janshakti Industries, speaks about his company's kitchen equipment products and solutions and its strategy for expanding the customer base.

Janshakti is today fulfilling the demands of a wide range of consumers from HoReCa with its most advanced kitchen solutions, innovative products and unmatched after sale services.

Tell us about your company's operations.

Janshakti Industries was incorporated almost half a century ago by my father Pravin Panchal. It has since gone on to become a total commercial kitchen equipment manufacturer and solution provider from being just a kitchen equipment company. Over time, we have excelled in managing turnkey projects, crafting commercial kitchens from the planning to manufacturing to installation stage and serving the needs of the HoReCa sector. Janshakti is today fulfilling the demands of a wide range of consumers from HoReCa with its most advanced kitchen solutions, innovative products and unmatched after sale services. The company has a very well organised manufacturing facility with over 9,000 sq. ft shop floor area equipped with latest CNC & Hydraulic machines and a highly motivated and dedicated workforce.

What is your product range?

We manufacture a range of diversified products – Preparation Machineries, Cooking Equipment, Working & Utility Tables, Fast Food Equipment, Exhaust & Fresh Air Systems, Deck Ovens, Bakery Equipment, Catering Equipment, Trolleys, Bain Marie, Dining Tables, Cold Equipment, Display & Counters Equipment, Wash Area Equipment, Dish Washers, LPG Gas Pipe Line Installation & Burner & Spares, among other things.

Our services and solutions include kitchen planning/ layout, installation of equipment and exhaust & fresh air system, and LPG system designing and LPG pipeline installation.

What is the price range of your products?

The price of our products range from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 3 lakh. For designing the entire kitchen, the price varies from project to project. On average, fast food kitchens cost between Rs. 2 lakh and Rs. 8 lakh, restaurant kitchens cost between Rs. 15 lakh and Rs. 25 lakh. The cost increases when we move to industrial canteen kitchens, which ranges from Rs. 25-60 lakh.

Who are the end users of your products?

The key markets for our products are hotels & restaurants, quick serving restaurants (QSRs), industrial & educational canteens, hospital canteens, food wagons & kiosks, and caterers.

How do you reach out to the end users?

We advertise in food industry specific magazines, tabloids and newspapers. We also do online branding on platforms such as IndiaMart, TradeIndia, Just Dial, and others. We have a professional sales team that works on contacting customers, understanding their needs, visiting the sites and providing appropriate solutions.



point, especially as their services account for a significant share of energy consumption in hotels (as much as 15 per cent of energy consumptions).

To buttress their energy efficiency credentials, manufacturers are benchmarking their products to efficiency testing standards. The product list includes combination ovens, convection ovens, rack ovens, fryers, large vat fryers, griddles, steam cookers, insulated holding cabinets, hot food holding cabinets, and an array of other appliances. The constant appraisals of products on energy efficiency benchmarks have thrown up interesting results. For instance, it has been found that steam cookers in particular offer huge savings for both energy and water. Similarly, convection ovens, too, offer great energy savings as do a host of other appliances.

These developments are responsible for a growing number of commercial food service

equipment that are energy-rated and labelled according to their power consumption efficiency. Several energy rating organisations offer benchmarks and performance ratings for a wide and varied list of electronic kitchen equipment. These organisations, along with the equipment manufacturers, are paving the way for mainstream efficiency standards in commercial kitchen equipment.

As energy efficiency norms become widely accepted, the food service industry is moving towards greater adoption of high-tech commercial kitchen equipment, which are manufactured keeping in mind not only quality and value, but also energy and water efficiency. For food and beverage outlets looking to overhaul their kitchens or even to replace or upgrade old appliances and equipment, choosing products that are energy efficient is the way to go. ●●

OIL-FREE COOKING is the new cool!

Increasing health consciousness of consumers has gradually changed the myths of conventional cooking by bringing in newer trends that perfectly balance the health proposition without compromising the taste of the dish. One such innovation is cooking spray which claims to reduce oil consumption up to 80 per cent.

by Shyamal Panchmatia

Ever expanding waistlines and increasing weight are the adverse effects of a busy modern lifestyle. Thanks to the shortage of time, we all want to spend less time in the kitchen and more time on the food service apps. On Sundays, when we are at home, we simply want to indulge in sumptuous meals, which leads to excessive oil consumption. Especially, in case of traditional Indian cuisine, you have to be reluctant about the copious amount of oil and ghee used while cooking as this is one of the major embodiments of an unhealthy diet.

Today, Indian consumers are at par with their global counterparts in the daily struggle to restrain calorie intake to achieve their fitness goals. Apart from emphasizing on exercising and focussing on a healthy diet, we are becoming conscious about the medium used for cooking. Perhaps that's why healthy variants of cooking oils, such as canola, rice bran or walnut are getting more prominence on supermarket shelves.

There is another healthier cooking medium available in the market — cooking spray. Globally, cooking sprays are commonly used and its increasing awareness is gaining ground in India as well. Use of cooking sprays has ample benefits as it uses less oil to cook a dish, less fat and naturally it helps you in keeping a count on your calories as the food you consume is much more healthier.

Nowadays almost every healthy recipe calls for a cooking spray to coat the pan! These sprays usually create a thin layer of oil on the pan so that the food does not stick to the pan or pot when you are sautéing it. Moreover, these cooking sprays are available in a variety of options to choose from such as: olive oil, groundnut oil, sunflower oil and ghee. These cooking sprays can easily transform the regular oily parantha, curry, sabzi, fried veggies or any other dish that you normally cook with a dollop of oil, into an almost non-oily, healthy delicacy.

There are ample options of cooking sprays available in the market. One such brand is Ray cooking spray. According to the manufacturer, the cooking spray can reduce your regular oil intake by 10 times and fat consumption up to 80 per cent.



Cooking spray can reduce your regular oil intake by 10 times and fat consumption by 80 per cent.

What makes this cooking spray healthy is its unique dispensing mechanism, which allows you to dispense a meagre amount of oil every time you spray. However, despite the reduced usage, there is no compromise with the taste of the dish. One of the common myths of traditional Indian cooking is that the usage of more oil results in tastier food.

The question to ask is: Why do we need to use a cooking spray when there are healthier options like canola, avocado, walnut or rice bran oils? These are low-fat options as well and have other health benefits too. Yes, these are healthy oils. But again, you can't control the amount you put in and so the dishes prepared with these will not be healthy anymore.

When compared to the conventional cooking oils, cooking spray may have number of benefits, both for your figure and your health: the cooking spray contains less oil content, which means fewer calories and it makes the food less greasy with fewer free radicals; thus reducing the risk of developing cardiac diseases, obesity and other lifestyle related diseases. ●●

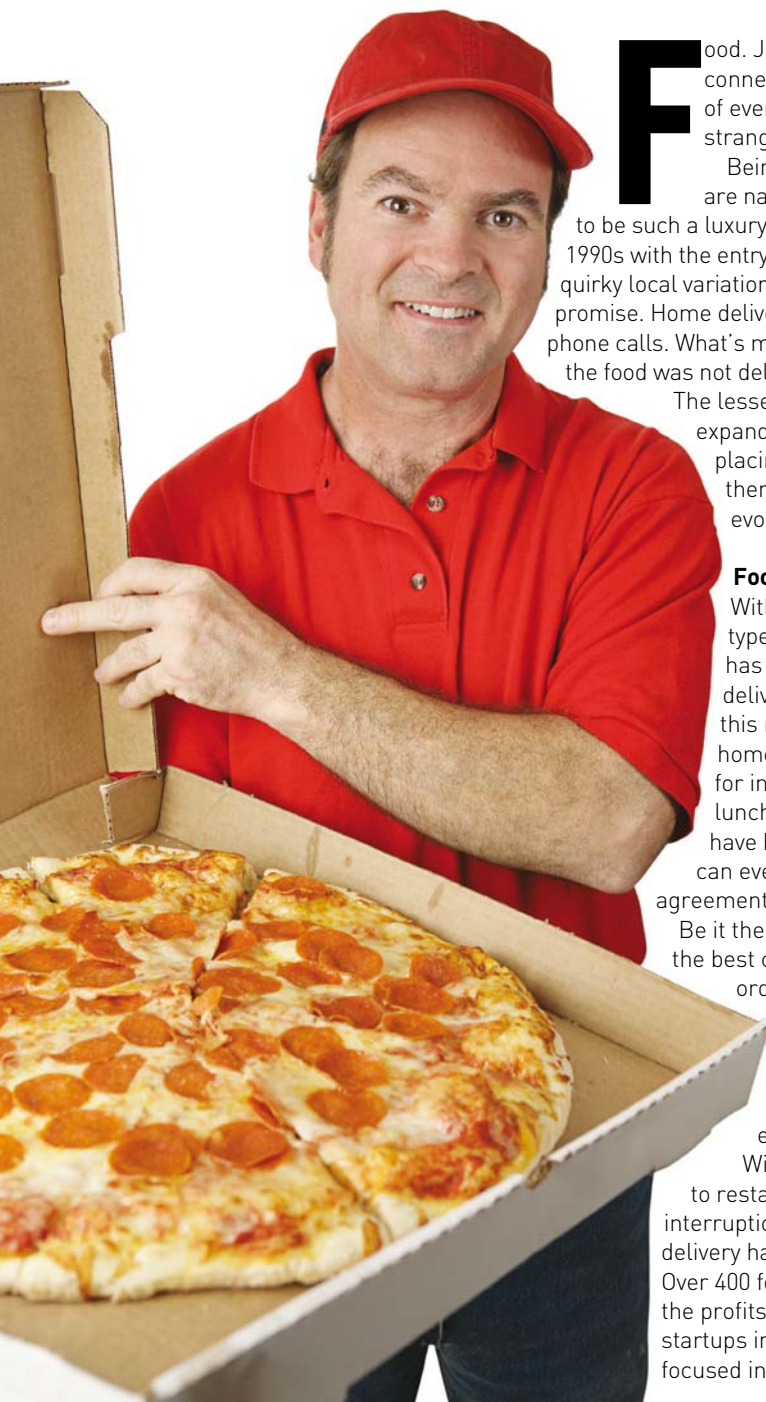


The author is MD of LB Industries

Spoilt for Choice

With the growth in disposable incomes, more exposure to different types of cuisines, and ease of internet use, a chunk of food ordering has moved online over the years. Online orders grew by 150% in 2016, despite being a challenging year for food delivery start-ups due to limited margins.

by Tabrez Shaikh



Food. Just a single word that conjures tastes, emotions, memories, connections, cultural associations, and so much more. It's at the heart of every social occasion, and could even be the sole talking point among strangers with nothing else in common.

Being so innately linked to our identity, our earliest impressions of food are naturally those of savouring home-cooked delicacies. Dining out used to be such a luxury at one time, reserved only for special occasions. This changed in the 1990s with the entry of international food chains in India. These restaurants often offered quirky local variations of international favourites at attractive prices, and with a brand new promise. Home delivery! Visits to restaurants soon started getting replaced with quick phone calls. What's more, some of these restaurants even offered money back policies if the food was not delivered in record time!

The lesser initiated took up the services of phone-based search services, to expand their directory of home-delivered food. At first, it was just about placing the meal order on the phone, with cash on delivery on receipt. But there's been no looking back since then! Let's see how food delivery has evolved over the years.

Food for every mood

With the growth in disposable incomes, more exposure to different types of cuisines, and ease of internet use, a chunk of food ordering has moved online over the years. Calling up the restaurant for a home delivery service is quite passé now. The working population has taken to this new trend most willingly, especially those who are not able to carry home-cooked lunches to office. The traditional dabbawalas of Mumbai, for instance, may have been an employee's only source for a wholesome lunch at one time. With the option of online ordering, however, executives have been able to access a varied menu from a range of eateries and can even order last-minute nowadays, instead of setting up monthly agreements with the dabbawalas in advance!

Be it the office-goers ordering a sumptuous lunch, a group of friends craving the best cheesecake, or a 20-something bachelor hungry after work, online ordering and food delivery has been the perfect answer for all the hunger pangs. Not only has the varied online food catalog managed to tempt the tastebuds of diners with different preferences, online food delivery setups have also promised a traffic-free lunch experience for busy working professionals who don't want to waste extra time on their lunch break.

With growing smartphone penetration, users just need to log in to restaurant apps to quickly and easily place meal orders, without any interruptions, or time wasted in call waiting. Apps often offer discounts, and delivery has been free too, sometimes even without a minimum order value! Over 400 food delivery apps were rolled out from 2013-2016, to cash in on the profits of the food tech business. Even home chefs have teamed up with startups in this space, to offer personalised healthy meals online for fitness-focused individuals, and working professionals looking for a light lunch.

The food delivery cookie crumbles ... but not quite

While many of these food delivery start-ups may have been forced to wrap operations in a few years, due to a lack of funds and poor operations planning, others have restructured business plans to continue to gain a share of the food tech space. And the numbers are still encouraging! Online orders grew by 150% in 2016, despite being a challenging year for food delivery start-ups due to limited margins.

Sensing more growth opportunities in this sector, even non-food industry players are entering the food delivery business with innovative models. A leading cab aggregator, for instance, has recently introduced a food delivery app to the Indian audience, to connect customers with a wider range of restaurants and delivery partners. Other start-ups from different domains are also entering the food delivery space to make the most of emerging prospects. And public enterprises are not far behind! The Indian Railways, for instance, has begun partnering with leading food chains on its e-catering service, so that passengers can pre-order meals online and have them delivered at designated stations. Within the food delivery industry, cloud kitchens are becoming the next buzzword, offering an end-to-end delivery platform for takeaways, without the operational expenses of a restaurant.

Corporates want a share of the pie too!

The buzz generated by online food ordering and delivery has also made a deep impact on the corporate dining space. It was definitely long overdue! After all, executives in the workforce spend most of their productive hours 5–6 days a week in offices. Food provides a welcome break in the middle of busy as well as lighter periods of work, and seamless ordering and delivery systems can make or break experience for tech-savvy employees.

Especially since the Indian government's demonetisation announcement in November 2016, employees have been more than happy to adopt digital payments and dispense with cash and change hassles. And what better place to enjoy e-payments than in the office cafeteria itself! Large corporate offices and IT parks have already been running cafeterias for some time now. Since the cafeteria fare competes with the best that takeaway cuisines from elsewhere can offer, facility managers and admins in-charge are well-aware of the



importance of maintaining food quality and service delivery. Add to that peak hour service delivery pressures, long cafeteria queues, cash and change reconciliation, and pilferage issues faced daily in the corporate cafeteria. Employees are quick to change loyalties if their expectations are not met. However, they are also keen to save time on the lunch break and often find it more hassle-free to dine in-house than look for regular takeaway options if they are satisfied with the menu and service. Luckily, the entry of digital cafeteria solutions is signalling a major overhaul of traditional operations.

Digital corporate cafeterias can ensure that employees enjoy the convenience of quick and easy food delivery with cash-free transactions. With secure and user-friendly mobile ordering interfaces in place, employees can select menu preferences from the comfort of their workstations. Online ordering facilities are often complemented with real-time tracking capabilities too, giving a clear view of meal preparation time. When the meals are ready, employees can head to the cafeteria to pick up their food, or request their in-house butler to deliver it to their seat, ensuring zero-queue cafeterias. With digital cafeterias in place, corporate admins and facility managers have also been able to offer a queue-free experience for employees at all times. Transparent online payments also spell the end of cash pilferage, and no extra account reconciliation efforts are required.

Infact, Zeta, a fintech startup belonging to the Directi group, has been pioneering developments in this space with innovative cafeteria modernisation solutions. With its range of digital ordering and payment facilities, this start-up has ushered in a revolution in cafeterias by seamlessly integrating its technology solutions within existing corporate cafeteria setups.

It seems like digital corporate cafeterias are really here to stay! They offer a win-win situation for every corporate and employee, and as the employee base continues to grow and the demand for quick food delivery among the workforce increases, it looks like the process is only set to get better. ♦♦

Over 400 food delivery apps were rolled out from 2013–2016, to cash in on the profits of the food tech business. Even home chefs have teamed up with startups in this space, to offer personalised healthy meals online for fitness-focused individuals, and working professionals looking for a light lunch.



The writer is Director, Enterprise Sales, Zeta.





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FOR MORE INFORMATION

Anjali Sondhi: +91-9810204297
 anjalisondhi@imagesgroup.in

Bhavesh Pitroda: +91-9867355551
 bhaveshpitroda@imagesgroup.in

FOR EXHIBITOR ENQUIRIES

North: Vineet Chadha
 +91-9350897807
 vineetchadha@imagesgroup.in

East: Piyali Roy Oberoi
 +91-9831171388
 piyalioberoi@imagesgroup.in

West: Bindu Pillai
 +91-9820324063
 bindupillai@imagesgroup.in

West: Waseem Ahmad
 +91-9833628852
 waseemahmad@imagesgroup.in

South: Suvir Jaggi
 +91-9611127470
 suvirjaggi@imagesgroup.in

FOR DELEGATE REGISTRATION
 Sarika Gautam: +91-9717544226
 sarikagautam@imagesgroup.in

The restaurant industry should be more closely knit and speak in a unified voice:

Chef Manu Chandra



One of India's youngest and most successful chefs, Manu Chandra's passion for food surfaced at a young age. This New York trained chef doesn't go by recipes but intuition and flavours. With a focus on innovation, Manu Chandra, Chef Partner Toast & Tonic, The Fatty Bao & Monkey Bar and Executive Chef Olive Beach, shares his journey with NRAI.

What inspired you to become a chef? Take us through your journey.

I always loved food and everything to do with it. Be it the trips to the mandi in Delhi with my grandma or helping in putting together a house party...to experimenting with the strangest ingredients and combinations in an effort to create something new. After studying History at St. Stephen's College, Delhi, and also pursuing my love for food at the same time, it began to dawn on me that I wanted to take up a profession where I could indulge my love for food. Then, one day, I happened to see a fascinating brochure for the Culinary Institute of America with a powerful image of one of the best cakes I had ever seen. That's when I decided that it was the place I wanted to go to and become a professional chef.

After graduating from the Culinary Institute of America (CIA), Hyde Park, New York, I apprenticed with some of the city's most celebrated kitchens, including restaurants like Daniel, Le Bernardin, Gramercy Tavern, Café Centro, Jean Georges and Town. I also opened the now legendary Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Manhattan. I then travelled to Norway to work with the Michelin starred chef Eyvind Hellstrom at Bagatelle. I returned to India in 2004 and joined Olive Beach, Bangalore. In 2012, Olive Cafes South Pvt. Ltd, a subsidiary of Olive Bar & Kitchen Pvt. Ltd, was set up in partnership with AD Singh and Chetan Rampal. Today, I am a partner at Toast & Tonic, Monkey Bar, The Fatty Bao, and I continue to be Executive Chef at Olive Beach, Bangalore.

Tell us about your company and its expansion plans.

Olive Cafés South Pvt. Ltd., one of India's most premier stand-alone restaurant brands, owns Monkey Bar, The Fatty Bao & Toast & Tonic. The Monkey Bar was set up by Olive Bar and Kitchen Pvt Ltd., in partnership with hospitality operations expert Chetan Rampal and myself.

First launched in Bangalore in mid-2012, Monkey Bar currently has an outpost in Delhi, Bangalore, Mumbai and Kolkata, giving the brand a national



National Restaurant Association of India
Voice of the Indian Restaurant Industry



footprint. Monkey Bar, the Indian avatar of the Gastropub, puts its own unique spin on the internationally popular concept. The emphasis is on fresh, innovative and affordable – in a trendy, chic atmosphere.

The Fatty Bao is an Asian gastro bar in Bangalore, Mumbai and Delhi. It is the love child of two fabulous ideas – new Asian-style dining and a cool bar. It is the manifestation of our love for innovative Asian fare, a sexy bar, great service, attention to detail and mint-fresh ideas.

Toast & Tonic, East Village Style, is an international restaurant and bar. Radical, edgy and spirited yet warm, welcoming and somewhat familiar, Toast & Tonic captures the soul and spirit of world cuisine with a balance of local Indian ingredients and freshly made products like never before.

In terms of future growth, while we have our expansion plans, we currently intend to focus on the four cities that we are present in already. There is no cap on the number of restaurants we would like to have, but we don't want to over reach ourselves. We would like to streamline our bandwidth on the current portfolio before we add more structure to it.

What made you include regional dishes in your pubs?

Our food philosophy at Monkey Bar is very simple. We believe in quality food, at affordable prices. We are a gastro-pub, and we are unabashedly Indian. Taking homely and familiar flavours and giving them an unconventional and playful twist has become a hallmark of the Monkey Bar offering. Regional tastes and flavours are not restricted to food alone; there is a dash of indigenous flavour and spices in Monkey Bar Special Cocktails too, like Mangaa, which is tastefully created with aam panna, jeera and salt along with Absolut or Incredible Sulk that has the flavour of Kala Khatta in it. The aim is to bring together what we are familiar with into a more mainstream format, which is more palatable to our contemporary lives and dining out trends.

How different is the Bengaluru restaurant sector from Mumbai and Delhi?

This is a question often asked, but increasingly I see little to no basis in it. All three markets are bustling and have great examples of innovative restaurants run and owned by passionate professionals and many of them have been able to break new ground. Bangalore has great weather and hence probably a lot more places with open air seating. A thriving microbrewery culture reaffirms the tagline of Pub City that it's always enjoyed, and continues to be a city that, compared to the other two, has somewhat rationalized real estate rentals. Besides that, it would be hard to tell cities apart, when you're actually dining in the restaurants in these cities.



What do you do to unwind yourself? How do you keep a balance between your personal and professional life?

It's tough, and I have to say that I don't really have much of a work-life balance. It's mostly work. But I do like to read when I get some time – sometimes between services. I also like to catch up on TV shows when I get home late at night. I've recently joined a gin appreciation club, which has a grand total of six members. But it's a nice change of scene once a month to enjoy and taste different varieties of my favourite spirit. Our restaurant Toast and Tonic is gin driven for a reason!

How have you been involved with NRAI? In your view, what more can be done through NRAI for making the restaurant sector stronger?

Membership! A lobbying body needs its industry to believe in it. If one will always be worried about individual interests alone, there's little chance that a positive movement will begin. Most other industries are closely knit and operate as a large entity. That unfortunately is still lacking for the most part in our business. So if the sector needs to get stronger and not be subject to ad-hoc and frankly ridiculous rules and scrutiny sometimes, the voice will have to be unified.

One piece of advice you would like to offer to young chefs wanting to be entrepreneurs.

Patience pays, so wait your turn. One failure can, in today's market, be enough to set you back for the rest of your career. Make bold moves, not brash ones!



NRAI hosted Training Seminars on GST in Mumbai, Delhi & Bengaluru

As the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime is set to replace multiple State and Central levies with a single tax regime, NRAI hosted a series of training seminar 'Decoding GST for the Restaurant Industry' across Mumbai, Delhi and Bengaluru for members of the restaurant fraternity. These training seminars were conducted in association with Grant Thornton as the Knowledge Partner. The GST training seminar covered a brief analysis on the Model GST Law including its draft rules and formats, rate structure, tax credit mechanism. It also covered likely GST Impact on Business including purchase of agricultural produce and semi-processed food, procurement of capital goods, supply of food, aerated drinks and bakery products and redemption of vouchers/ credit coupons/ gift coupons/ reward points etc. Further, the challenges that industry may face during its transition and implementation were also highlighted in training.

Speaker Biren Vyas, Partner, Grant Thornton said, 'Upon effective implementation of GST, it is expected to result in reduction in overall tax on goods and services in the

long run and improve GDP and business growth in India.'

The seminars across three cities saw exceptional turnout where NRAI members gained insight to various intricate details regarding its implementation. Mumbai saw a turnout of representatives from The Bombay Canteen, Harrys India, Food Matters Pvt Ltd, Hardcastle Restaurants Pvt Ltd, Olive Bar & Kitchen, Silver Beach Entertainment And Hospitality LLP, Coffe by Di Bella, Swiggy, Texmex Cuisine India Pvt Ltd. Representatives from Azure Hospitality Pvt Ltd, The Big Chill Cafe, Impresario Handmade Restaurants, Old World Hospitality Pvt Ltd, Beer Cafe, Bercos, TGI Fridays, Tamasha, The Colony Bistro, Coffee Day Global, Lite Bite Foods Pvt Ltd attended the seminar in Delhi and Brewsky Hospitality Pvt Ltd, Truffles, Shilton Hospitality LLP, Nandos, Barley & Grapes Cafe, Fava, Dawn And Beach, Sharma Restaurant, Millers 46 Restaurant in Bengaluru.

NRAI's seminars are always committed to serve as platforms to provide knowledge on key areas, engage, and exchange ideas and network with the industry leaders.



(L-R): Biren Vyas, Ashish Gupta & Dhanraj Bhagat - Grant Thornton India



Biren Vyas, Partner, Grant Thornton India



Restaurateurs networking at the Seminar

Chef Manu Chandra- NRAI's New Chief for Bengaluru Chapter!

Chef Manu Chandra was appointed as the new NRAI Chapter Head for Bengaluru. Chef Chandra is Chef Partner Toast & Tonic, The Fatty Bao & Monkey Bar and Executive Chef, Olive Beach.

Speaking about the tasks he would like to undertake to make the chapter stronger, he said, "First thing that the core team that has been formed (a team that's tackling all issues together) is to streamline and consolidate what can be tackled each year. The idea is also to create some interactive experiences for members, push

for an aggressive membership drive, gain clarity on ambiguous rules by several departments and make the NRAI Bengaluru Chapter gain credibility amongst both members and agencies."

Chef Chandra was appointed on stepping down of the previous chapter head Mr Ashish Kothare, who was at the helm of affairs for two and a half years. Mr Kothare, CEO, Bell Pepper Hospitality, was responsible for kick-starting and establishing the local chapter of the NRAI.



National Restaurant Association of India
Voice of the Indian Restaurant Industry

NRAI's meeting with CEO, FSSAI

Pawan Agarwal, CEO, FSSAI requested the NRAI for partnering with several programs the authority is undertaking in a meeting at his office.

While discussing all the projects, Mr. Agarwal expressed interest in organising Master Training Programs for designating food safety supervisors for restaurants. He requested the NRAI for sharing feedback on the program for finalising it and kick-starting these trainings.

He also mentioned that he would like the NRAI to be closely involved for creating best practices for the restaurant industry and would like the local chapters to actively participate in all its projects. NRAI will also be submitting a detailed document on over-lapping licenses to the CEO for his review.

Along with Mr. Riyaz Amlani, President, Mr. Kabir Advani, Vice-President, and Mr. Rahul Singh, Honorary Secretary, other representatives from the association included dignitaries from Jubilant Foodworks, Hardcastle Restaurants, Yum Restaurants and Burger King.



NRAI Representatives meeting the CEO, FSSAI



Riyaz Amlani

Guidelines are not laws. Service charge in restaurants legal:

Riyaz Amlani, President, NRAI

“Guidelines are not laws. The present statements by the government is causing unnecessary confusion in public, which is adversely affecting the smooth functioning of restaurants. It is once again reiterated that as of now levy of service charge by restaurants is legal and does not violate the provisions of Consumer Protection Act, 1986, since the same is mentioned in the menu / price list and informed to the customer. Levy of Service Charge directly benefits the 6 million people employed in the industry. Of these, more than 60% employees depend on service charge to augment upto 30% of their income. All the organised Food and Beverage operators employ the service charge method to ensure that all employees are beneficiaries of service charge and not just waiters but also cooks, Toilet attendants, and cleaners. Unless there is a legislation, restaurants will continue to levy service charge.”

NRAI seeks relief from Delhi High Court regarding stoppage of new excise licences in Delhi

The AAP Government in Delhi had stopped issuing new excise licences for restaurants since the last 8 months. As per some news reports, this was done presumably on verbal directions from the political dispensation due to political posturing for the various state elections. After exhausting all procedural remedies, we have approached the Delhi High Court for relief in the case.

NRAI approaches Punjab and Haryana High Court regarding single wholesaler provision in the Haryana Excise Policy for 2017-18.

Haryana's excise policy for 2017-18 has made a provision of only one licence holder for wholesale of Imported Foreign Liquor in the state, thereby creating monopoly. The allotment of L-1BF licence to a sole entity would lead to escalation of prices of premium imported liquor brands and adversely impact the restaurant business. NRAI has challenged this provision before the Punjab and Haryana High Court.

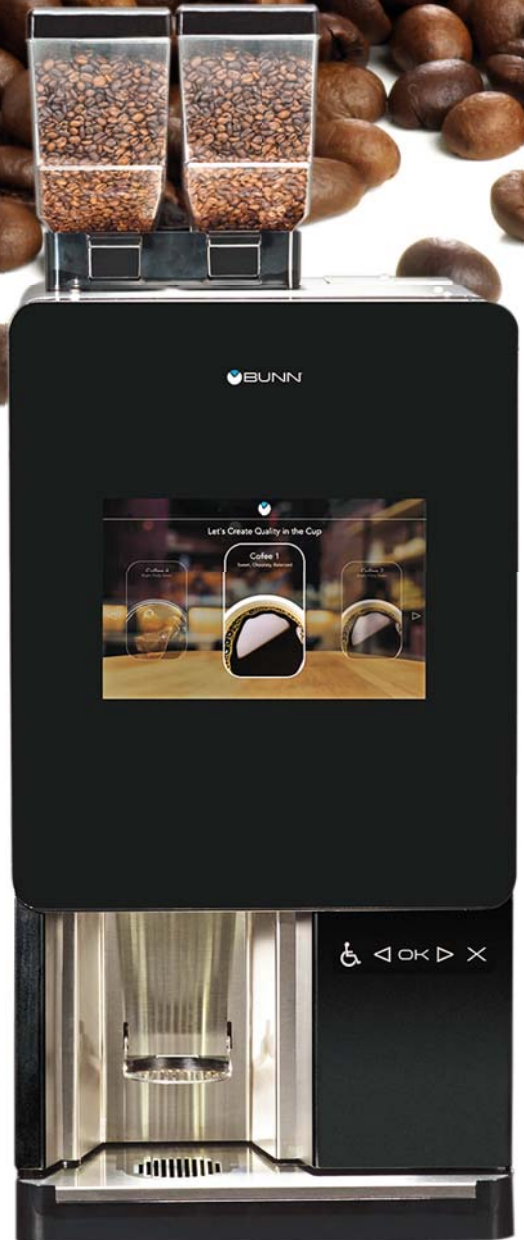
NRAI to launch Login Facility for Members on nrai.org

As a step towards providing more facilities to the members, NRAI has started with the Member Login feature on its website www.nrai.org. This feature will allow members to update / edit their profile page. It will also give them exclusive access to important information which may not be visible to non-members.

NRAI has already dispatched letters and emails for getting relevant details from members for giving access to the profile pages with information on renewals.



National Restaurant Association of India
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THE MACHINE MATTERS

Filter coffee has been around for as long as we can remember. But in recent years, with increasing customer interest in the variety and complexity of coffee, “it has become the star of the show in markets around the globe,” says Lina Chiodo, Vice President Sales and Marketing EMEA, VP Global Accounts for the Bunn-O-Matic Corporation (Bunn), a leading manufacturer of precision brewing equipment. Delivering the best results in the cup to every individual is one of the corporation’s brand pillars.

“**W**hat makes filter coffee so popular is that it actually allows you to taste complexity in a cup,” says Lina Chiodo alluding to the infinite varieties of coffee available to consumers today. Each has a distinct characteristic and taste profile. While aroma, acidity, body and flavour define the latter, characteristics may range from exotic or floral to nutty, smoky or spicy. “The brewing process releases the whole potential of the taste and flavouring notes of the respective coffee,” Chiodo explains.

Origins, harvest, processing, roast and many other aspects along the production route decisively influence the taste of the beans and hence of the brew. However, says the coffee aficionado, “You can ruin a cup of coffee and all the work that has gone into it in only 4-6 minutes.” That’s how long the brewing process usually takes.

“At Bunn, our technology and equipment design is all about ensuring the best results in the cup. That is what’s been driving us for nearly 60 years,” underlines the sales and marketing expert. In order to set free all the coffee notes, various parameters must be taken into account: “Apart from water, grind and filter media (i.e. paper filters used for brewed coffee), the three Ts – time, turbulence and temperature – play a vital role in delivering optimum results for each coffee variety.”

Time: The contact time between the coffee grounds and the water determines the amount of coffee material extracted, which is the major component that affects flavour: while too much contact time will result in a bitter taste, the coffee will turn out weak if the time the water is in contact with the coffee is too short. – Chiodo: “Our brewers oversee the contact time between the coffee and water so coffee is never over-extracted and bitter.”





THE HISTORY BEHIND THE BRAND

The Bunn history goes back to Jacob Bunn, who over 170 years ago opened a grocery store in Springfield, IL. That venture grew into Bunn Capitol Wholesale Grocery Company and was later managed by George R. Bunn who founded a beverage equipment division in the late 1950's. This division was dedicated to the coffee brewing process and coffee equipment.

George Bunn is credited for introducing the world's first flat bottom coffee filter. The Model O, patented with the Gravity Drip system, was the company's first commercial brewer.

Today, Bunn remains privately-held and family-owned. Arthur "Hy" Bunn has been the President and CEO since 1988, assuming overall management and leadership of the worldwide beverage equipment company that his father founded.



Temperature: The temperature of the water during the brewing cycle also influences the flavour and extraction of coffee significantly. "The ideal water temperature for coffee brewing is between 91 to 94 °C. Brewing at a temperature range that is too hot will result in undesirable bitter flavour, while cooler temperatures may result in a flat taste." – Chiodo: "Bunn manages the science behind brewing and ensures that water is consistently at the optimal brewing temperature."

Turbulence: As the hot water passes through and over the coffee, it creates a turbulence, which allows the particles in the coffee to separate and water to flow around and through the particles for proper extraction. In order to fully unlock flavour from the coffee, an ideal level of turbulence is needed to wet and extract the coffee evenly. – Chiodo: "Our spray heads are specially designed to control the flow rate of water, and properly float grounds for optimal extraction."

Open distribution model

Large and small foodservice players in over 90 countries worldwide rely on Bunn's expert technology to provide their customers with best results in the cup consistently. "Our filter drip business has been growing year on year," Chiodo



proudly reports. The privately held company, which since 1957 has expanded its portfolio to also include dispensed beverage equipment for espresso, tea, juice, granita, filtered water and many other specialty beverages, has a very open distribution model: dealing with major roasting companies and coffee chains directly, Bunn also sells through roasters and has primary distributors in all of its major regions.

As requirements differ between the various foodservice channels, the Bunn portfolio of coffee equipment, which has been continuously enhanced by a sincere commitment to innovation and technological advancement, is extensive. Depending on the particular needs, the customer can choose, for example, from a variety of coffee server types, brewing systems (e.g. pump system, pourover, pulse brew, air infusion, automatic), as well as variants of capacity, water access, voltage or warmer options: choices are vast.

While traditional coffee brewers (equipped with state-of-the art technology for precise extraction control and optimum results in the cup) are still much in demand, a major trend that has spurred product innovation in recent years has been the single-cup phenomenon. "We have a new piece of equipment that we're just launching and that we're very excited about: Sure Immersion is a bean-to-cup machine that produces a superior cup of filter coffee, which is freshly ground and brewed, one cup at a time. According to some very sophisticated coffee experts, it's the cleanest coffee they've ever tasted out of a machine."

Sure Immersion is equipped with a 25.4 cm touch screen and two separate hoppers, each of which has its own individually programmable grinder. It uses an air infusion technology that provides the tools for accelerating extraction and dialing in brewing recipes. "Via intuitive recipe screens, the operator can control the time, frequency, and force of the turbulence to ensure that each cup is

The ideal water temperature for coffee brewing is between 91 to 94 °C. Brewing at a temperature range that is too hot will result in undesirable bitter flavour, while cooler temperatures may result in a flat taste.

Consistency in taste irrespective of time and place, on the other hand, is what customers expect from international brands.

consistently prepared to the desired flavour profile," Chiodo explains. "Air infusion allows for increasing or decreasing body and for targeting certain flavour characteristics to unlock the nuances."

The extraction process in Sure Immersion is a hybrid of filter drip and immersion brewing. On one hand it is similar to flat bottom, paper filter, and on the other hand it mimics vacuum/siphon infusion. Says Chiodo: "This hybrid brewing combines the best of these two processes and allows control over all the sensory aspects of each cup of coffee."

Though Bunn has always been at the forefront of beverage equipment innovation, the company's and employees' enthusiasm does not end there. "We are fanatical about the consumer and the customer experience," emphasizes Chiodo. "It is paramount to always keep focused on what the needs, tastes and habits are of the ever changing consumer. Hence the level of engagement, sharing and exchange of knowledge with our customers drives our innovation, ensuring best results in the cup every time. Educating and training our customer on to actually use all the technology that is in the machine is the fun part."

Different taste profiles

This is especially important as there isn't a one-fits-all setting for the perfect cup: "You can't do to an Ethiopian coffee what you're going to do to a



coffee from Guatemala," the marketing and coffee expert stresses. "You need a different recipe, because they taste massively different." Besides, consumption patterns and preferences vary greatly between different countries and cultures: the grind size and amount of coffee per litre that goes into the filter differs significantly. "What works in the USA, will not work in Europe. We've learned this by listening to our customers globally," says Chiodo. "The beauty of our equipment is that we can match whatever taste profile the country needs."

Consistency in taste irrespective of time and place, on the other hand, is what customers expect from international brands. Within a chain, customers want the same great cup of coffee no matter whether they're visiting a coffee shop in Beijing, Istanbul or Buenos Aires, which is a major challenge for the operators. "We have the equipment to assist them to reach that goal," says Chiodo.

Her team and their colleagues all around the globe spend a lot of time on educating themselves and others in coffee. "Our job is about building a relationship and helping our customers learn and understand what they can do with their coffee with our brewing equipment." In order to show how decisive it is to know the workings of their equipment, Chiodo likes to have Bunn customers try three different cups of coffee – "We use the same coffee, same machine, and only change the settings of the technology during the brewing cycle." The difference, she asserts, is striking. It truly demonstrates what impact technology can have on the cup. ●●

BUNN-O-MATIC CORPORATION

Established: 1957 by George Bunn

Headquarters: Springfield, IL, USA

CEO & President: Arthur Bunn

Warehouses/Offices: USA, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Germany, China, UAE, UK

Commercial Products: Coffee and iced tea brewers for multi-cup and single-cup use; superautomatic espresso machines; coffee bean grinding systems; dispensers for cold or hot beverages e.g. juice, lemonade, hot chocolate, cappuccino and iced coffee; liquid coffee dispensers; gourmet ice systems; precise temperature water systems; water quality systems; paper filters

Distribution:

→ 90 countries globally, 45 countries in the EMEA region

Road Map:

Domestic & International growth, investing heavily in growing regions

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